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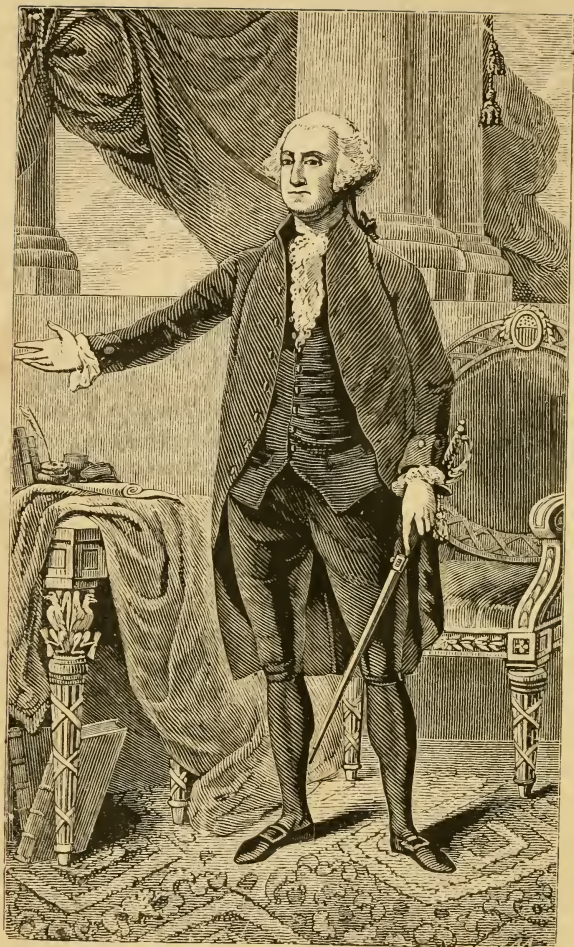


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LIFE OF
WASHINGTON.





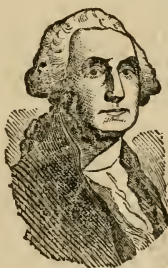
George Washington

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THE AMERICAN BOY'S
LIFE OF
WASHINGTON.

By MRS. ANNA M. HYDE.

"LET ALL THE ENDS THOU AIM'ST AT BE THY COUNTRY'S,
THY GOD'S, AND TRUTH'S."



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PREFACE.

It might almost seem presumptuous for any one to offer another version of the life of Washington, when the ground has been so fully occupied by worthier pens. After Marshall, Sparks, and Irving have written, who indeed need take up the subject? Yet it was suggested that a *boys'* life of this great man might still be welcomed by the public, and would find readers among the rising generation—those who would shrink from a larger work, and yet could find enjoyment in a little book like this.

In the present volume a clear narrative has been attempted in a very condensed form, omitting and avoiding such technical and abstruse expressions as frequently occur in larger works, and aiming chiefly to be understood by the boys for whom it

has been written. In preparing it the writer is largely indebted to the three able biographers above mentioned, especially to Sparks and Irving, to whose full and detailed accounts she refers all those who wish to study the subject more minutely.

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THE LIFE OF WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER I.

Introduction—Parentage and pedigree of Washington.

To the boys of America, who are soon to be its law-makers and statesmen—its soldiers and defenders—the history of their country, and the life of him whom we call its FATHER and FOUNDER, must ever be interesting and important subjects of study. Every American boy, who seeks a model after which he may form his own life and character, will find one worthy of close imitation in that of Washington, whose name stands before the world without a whisper of reproach, to be the pride and boast of all his countrymen.

Not that every one's vocation will be war, or the founding, or even defending of his country by force of arms ; but there are many other ways of serving its cause, which is the cause of justice and liberty, and every one who arrives at the age of manhood may assist in the work.

As we realize ourselves to be the fellow-countrymen of Washington, let us strive to show ourselves worthy of so high an honor—emulating not only his public, but his private virtues ; his truthfulness, his filial affection, his piety, and faithfulness, both to his country and his God.

George Washington, the third son of Augustine Washington, was born on the 22d day of February, 1732, at his father's residence, on Bridges' Creek, Westmoreland Co., Va. His great-grandfather, John Washington, a gentleman of highly respectable family in the north of England, emigrated to America about the year 1657, and settled on the place where George was born.

Together with his brother, who accompanied him from England, John Washington purchased quite a large tract of land in Westmoreland Co.,

between the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers. He married Miss Anne Pope, the daughter of a near neighbor, and they settled near the mouth of Bridges' Creek, a small stream which empties into the Potomac.

He soon became a wealthy planter, holding offices of trust and honor under the colonial government, and he was the Colonel Washington who, when the war against the Seneca Indians was begun, led the Virginia forces, and put an end to the incursions and outrages which the savages were constantly committing upon the settlers along the Potomac.

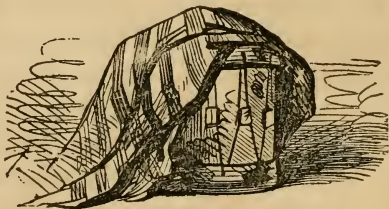
The district where he resided was called in his honor, and is still known by the name of "Washington Parish."

This much-honored ancestor of the greater Washington was buried in the family vault, on the plantation at Bridges' Creek, as were several of the succeeding generations.

Augustine, the grandson of John Washington, was born at this place, in 1694, and was twice married. His first wife was Jane Butler, of Westmoreland Co., who lived about thirteen years after her marriage, and left two sons, Lawrence and Augustine. His second wife was

Mary Ball, the daughter of Colonel Ball, of the same county. She is reported to have been very young and beautiful. Her children were four sons and two daughters, one of the latter dying in infancy.

The eldest son of this second marriage was George, the great man who has immortalized the name. The old-fashioned farm-house, with sloping eaves, and brick chimneys outside, in which he was born, has fallen into decay, and there is nothing but a stone to mark the spot where it stood. An inscription upon it tells the visitor that this was the birthplace of Washington.



CHAPTER II.

Removal from the place of his birth—Hobby's school—His father's care—The letters in the garden—Story of the hatchet—Love of truth.

WHEN George was little more than five years old, his father left the old homestead of his ancestors, and removed to another estate in Stafford County, opposite to where the city of Fredericksburg now stands.

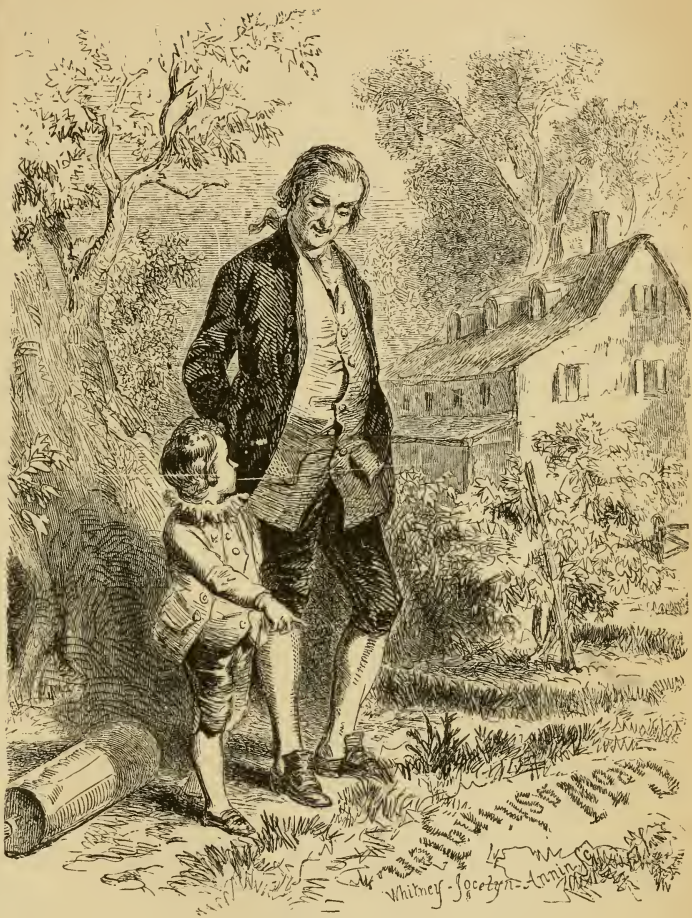
There are some now living who can remember the house before it fell into a heap of ruins, and they describe it as a plain old-fashioned Virginia farm-house, having four rooms on the first floor, steep roof, with low, projecting eaves, and several chambers in the attic. It stood on a little hilly piece of ground, overlooking the muddy waters of the Rappahannock.

At this place George passed the years of his boyhood, and on a corner of one of the broad fields stood the plain and humble school-house where he and his younger brothers received their first lessons in the rudiments of study.

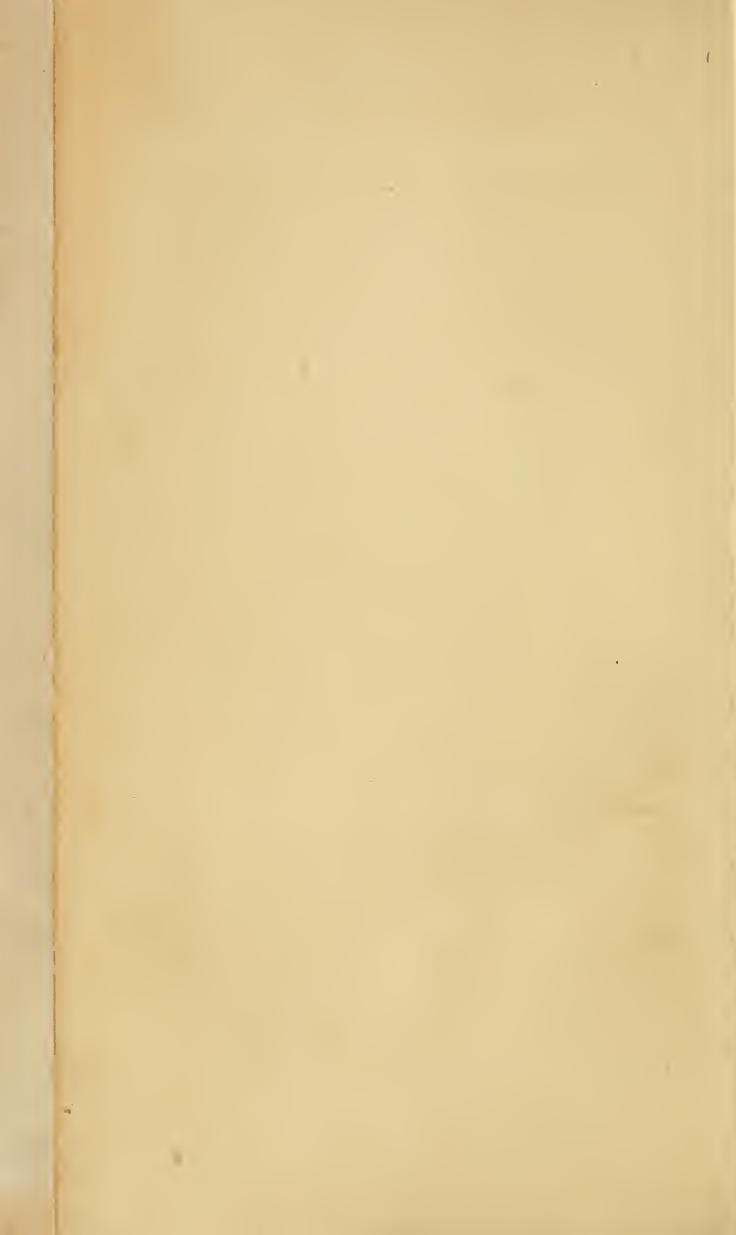
Mr. Hobby, the teacher of this little school,

and sexton of the parish, was a tenant of Mr. Washington, and as he did not possess great learning himself, could not be expected to produce finished scholars. A, B, C, and a little spelling and reading, with a smattering of arithmetic and penmanship, was the extent of learning that came within the range of his ability to impart. But little George had, besides this, the oversight and instruction of his excellent father, who was very fond of his children, and took great delight in doing every thing that would give them pleasure. Every day he would take them by the hand, and leading them forth into the fields, would point out to them the wonders of nature and the goodness of God, constantly endeavoring to instil into their minds the duties of religion and the love of truth.

With a view to George's gratification and surprise, this good father once prepared a smooth bed in the garden, and had written thereon with the point of a sharp stick the name of his son. Then sowing along the little furrows some fine seed, it was once more smoothed over, and left for the rain and sun to produce the intended effect. In about ten days afterward, as George and his father were taking their usual walk



Washington and his Father.



around the well-known garden paths, they paused to gather the dark ripe gooseberries that were sure to occasion a little interruption at this point of the road, and as the boy reached over to gather the largest and ripest from the other side of the bush, he suddenly caught sight of the green letters, which now stood out distinctly on the smooth ground beyond the bushes. There they were, plain enough, to be sure—
GEORGE WASHINGTON. Not a letter missing.

“Oh, look here, papa!” he exclaimed, in an ecstasy of joy, as he beheld the strange and unexpected sight: “How did it happen that these letters should grow here to spell my name?”

“It is certainly a curious affair,” replied his father, with mock gravity.

“But how did it happen, papa?” persisted the child, who had no idea that such things came by chance.

So his father explained to him how he had indeed sown the seeds in that form, but that his heavenly Father alone could cause them to sprout and grow: thus bringing a good lesson out of even this little incident.

The anecdote of the hatchet is no doubt familiar to many of our youngest readers; yet, as

it shows how firmly the love of truth was implanted in his nature, we will nevertheless repeat it here.

When George was some seven or eight years old, his father gave him a hatchet; and like all boys who are suddenly made the owners of such a desirable possession, he began trying its edge on every thing that came in his way. Unfortunately, however, he thoughtlessly chopped down one of his father's favorite young cherry-trees, never dreaming of the mischief he had done until Mr. Washington next day discovered it, and inquired for the culprit.

As soon as the boy heard of the loss, and learned how highly his father had valued the tree, he came forward in a manly manner, though with great sorrow pictured on his countenance, and exclaimed, "I did it father, with my hatchet; I cannot tell a lie."

This so touched his father's heart, that he embraced his son most tenderly, while he declared how much more he valued this evidence of truthfulness than all the trees in his garden.

CHAPTER III.

Limited advantages for education—Love for his brother Lawrence—Military spirit of the family—Lawrence engages in the French and Spanish War—Sails for Jamaica—George joins in the military spirit—Plays soldier at school—The youthful commander—Death of his father—His excellent mother—Her care of her children—Distribution of the property—Goes to live with his brother Augustine—School adventures.

IN those days there were few good schools in the country, and it was customary for the wealthier people to send their sons to England to be educated, especially if they were intended for any of the learned professions, which required more than is usually comprised in a plain English education.

Of course, in a large family, it was scarcely possible that all should be sent abroad, and in this case Lawrence Washington, the eldest son, was selected; and, after spending several years in England, he returned, a well-informed and accomplished young man of twenty-one. His favorite brother George was fourteen years younger, being at this time between seven and

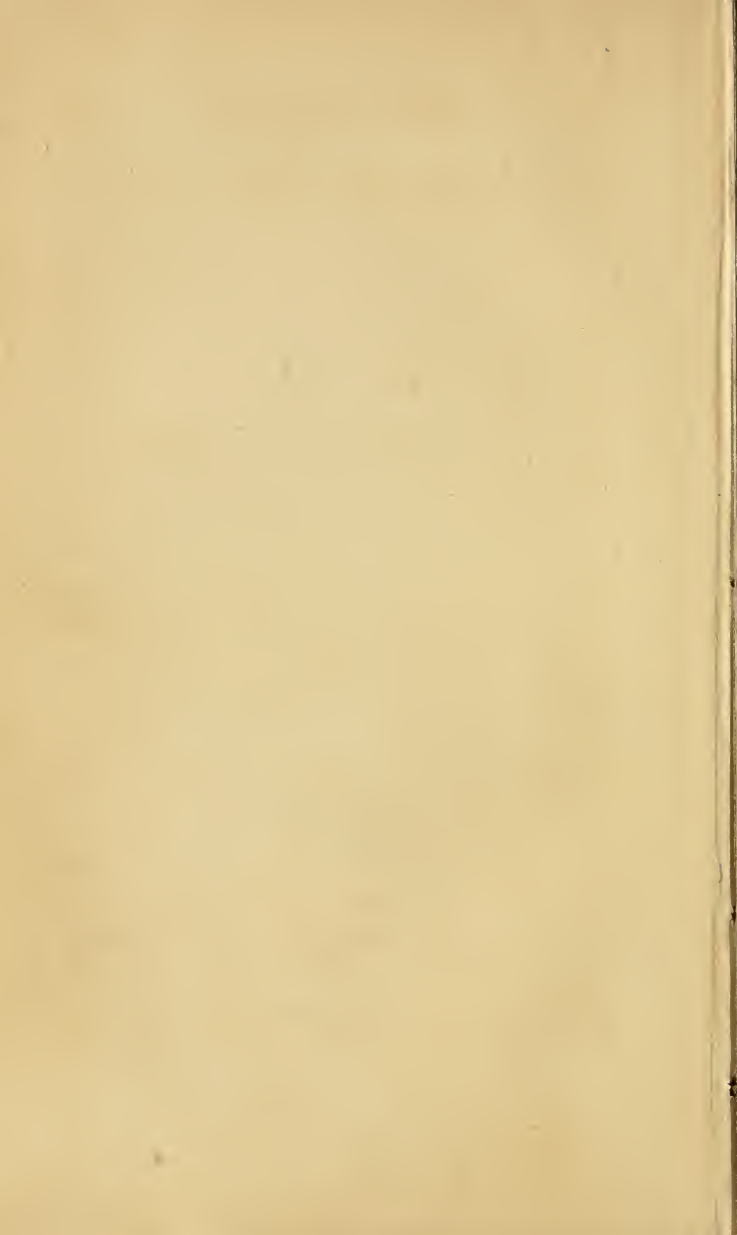
eight, and Lawrence, who is always spoken of as a youth of noble character, extended to the little boy an affectionate care and interest, which won for him the full measure of childish confidence and regard. George considered his manly brother as a model for his imitation; and it was well for him that the pattern set before him was so well worthy of the name.

In the early histories to be found in the genealogies of the Washington family, it seems that a military spirit had marked the race since the days of William the Conqueror's warlike knights. Lawrence Washington had inherited it in some degree; and so, when the orders came to raise a regiment in the colonies for the West Indies, to resist the combined forces of the Spanish and French, who were about to make an attack on the British possessions there, the young soldier, though only twenty-two years of age, was appointed captain in the new regiment, and sailed with Admiral Vernon and General Wentworth for Jamaica.

It was not to be wondered at that George, who had entered with great interest into all the preparations for his brother's campaign, should share in the martial spirit of the hour. He



The Young General.



never had cared for in-door sports; he loved to run and jump, and could throw a stone entirely across the wide river, which was a considerable feat for a man. But now all his amusements became of the military order. He cared no longer for tops, or marbles, or balls. He wanted all the boys to be soldiers, and he, of course, their captain. There he stood when play hour would come, with all the boys in Hobby's school ranged along the wall, to be drilled and instructed in the new art of shouldering muskets and brandishing swords. A few paper hats and chicken feathers, with other impromptu finery that could be gathered up, answered for the uniform, while cornstalks furnished admirable muskets, and calabashes answered well for drums.

When these preliminaries were settled, the company was divided into two parts; one was to be the French, and the other the American army. George would always command the latter, while the biggest boy in the school, one William Bustle, was chosen to lead the enemy. Then they would march and countermarch, the rough wooden swords they had whittled for themselves brandished high in the air, with

words of authority, just as if both the occasion and the armies were the most real in the world.

But when the sham fight began, and the cornstalks came into play with full fury, victory was sure to rest on the American side. He was George Washington even then, although but ten years old.

Before George was eleven years old, the kind and excellent father, who had always taken such an interest in his welfare, and had so greatly promoted his growth in knowledge and virtue, was taken from him. The lad was away from home on a visit to his relatives in another county, when summoned to attend the death-bed, and arrived only in time to hear his father's last farewell.

Mr. Washington's illness was short but severe, and from perfect health, a few days sufficed to close his earthly career. Thus the son lost the benefit of those wise counsels which had always guided his steps, at the very age when he most needed them. But happily those early lessons had taken deep root in his heart, and the kind and watchful care of an excellent and pious mother was still permitted to lead

and mould his character for its great, and then unforeseen future, of honor and distinction.

The mother of Washington was all that a mother ought to be—tender and affectionate, yet firm, and requiring from her children the strictest obedience. She was accustomed to read daily to them from the best and holiest books, and teach them the duties of prayer, and reverence for their Father in heaven.

With such a mother to train his childhood, no wonder that his morals were pure, and his private character unspotted; for those rules of life which he learned at his mother's knee were too deeply implanted for any outward cares or after scenes to efface. The favorite book from which she used to read aloud to the assembled group of her children is still preserved in the collection of relics at Mount Vernon. It was a copy of Sir Matthew Hale's "Contemplations, Moral and Divine."

"A precious document," says Washington Irving. "Let those who wish to know the moral foundation of his character consult its pages."

Augustine Washington left a large estate, enough to give a good portion to each of his

children. The place now known as Mount Vernon, on the banks of the Potomac, was given to his oldest son Lawrence, who was now married to Miss Fairfax, of Fairfax county. It was so named by Lawrence Washington, after his return from the West Indies and Carthagena, in honor of Admiral Vernon, who had commanded the expedition. Here he settled with his young bride about three months after his father's death, while Augustine, the second son, took up his residence on the old homestead, at Bridges' Creek.

George's share was to be the house and lands where the family were then residing, on the Rapahannock; but all the property intended for her own children was intrusted to the mother's keeping until they should come of age.

By the time George was twelve years old, he had learned as much as Mr. Hobby, the sexton, was able to teach, and he was, therefore, sent to live with his half-brother Augustine, at Bridges' Creek, where there was a good school taught by a person named Williams. Here he soon became a favorite with the other boys, being at the same time studious and attentive to his lessons.

It is told by one who was a school-mate of his, at this famous institution, that in all cases of disputes among the boys, he was the one who was called on to settle them; and they were always contented to abide by his judgment. Occasionally, also, when the master was absent from the school-room, a quarrel would arise, and hard words and fisticuffs were sure to follow before matters could be settled between the belligerent school-boys; but whether this occurred in Hobby's school-room, or among the larger growth in Mr. Williams' more pretentious establishment, George Washington was the only one who could, or would interfere to separate the parties, and make peace between them. His simple request was generally enough to quiet the disturbance, such was his influence, and so well did he use it.



CHAPTER IV.

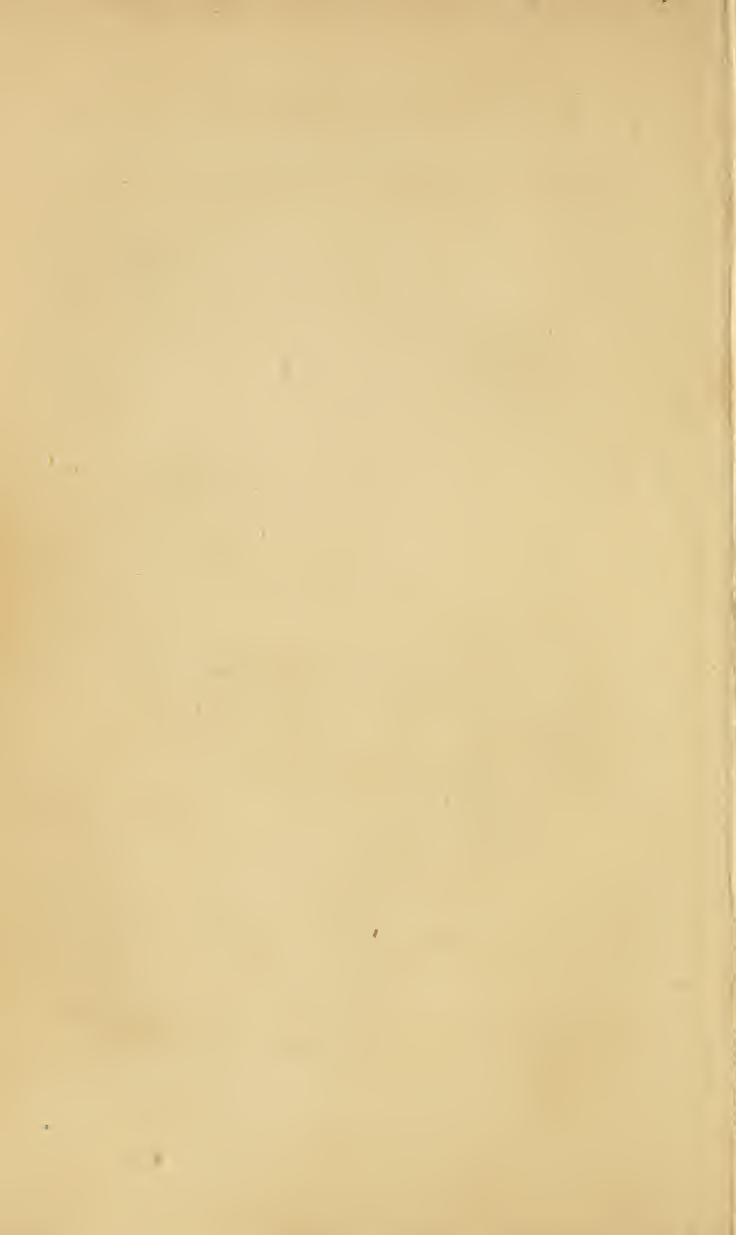
Washington's education—Strong frame and active habits of body—Experiments in training horses—Desire to enter the navy—His mother's opposition—His obedience—His taste for surveying—Neatness of his drawings—Falls in love—The Fairfaxes—Lord Fairfax comes to Virginia—His large landed possessions—Washington accompanies him on his hunting excursions—Is employed to survey his lands.

GEORGE WASHINGTON'S education was plain and practical, but not brilliant. He was neat and exact in his penmanship, and pursued those studies which were likely to prove most useful to a man of business; thus he became very thorough at accounts, and able to keep all his books and financial matters in the most complete and business-like order. In after-years, when his duties became so numerous, and his public responsibilities very heavy, his various accounts were all fairly and accurately kept, in his own handwriting.

As he grew to man's size, his strong and agile form increased in physical power, until he could accomplish, with ease, many a feat that would



The Peace-Maker.



be considered quite wonderful in a full-grown man. The various athletic sports, of which he was so fond, all favored the development of nerve and sinew; and his courage and skill in managing horses was illustrated on several occasions that are recorded. Once he undertook to train a wild and vicious horse, belonging to his mother; and, at the evident risk of his life, he mounted, and kept his place in the saddle, although the furious animal endeavored in vain to throw him. At last the horse, in its frantic efforts to disengage itself from the rider, burst a blood-vessel, and fell to the ground, in a dying state. Of course, the loss of such an animal was considerable, and the boy felt, perhaps, that he deserved his mother's censure; but, without waiting until another had told her of the mischief done, he frankly acknowledged himself in fault, and asked her forgiveness, which we may be sure was not withheld.

At the age of fourteen, while still at school, George conceived a great desire to enter the British navy. This arose, probably, from his hearing the oft-repeated stories of the recent voyages and military undertakings in which his brother Lawrence had been engaged. His heart

was set upon going to sea, and he drew from his mother a most reluctant consent, chiefly granted through the urgent solicitations of his brothers and other friends. They obtained a midshipman's warrant for him, and all the preparations were made for his departure. His trunk was even placed on board the vessel, which was lying at anchor in the Potomac, near Mount Vernon, when his mother's grief, and openly expressed desire that he should not go, caused him to give up, without a murmur, his favorite scheme. Although so firm and courageous, in her ideas of duty, she could not bring her mind to intrust this, her eldest son, to the dangers of the sea-going profession. Who can wonder at her weakness, if it were such, and who can help admiring the noble youth who so readily gave up his own cherished plans, just as they were so nearly accomplished, to gratify his mother? But the hand of God was directing in all this, because he had other work for this son to do upon the land, which could not well be intrusted to another; and how different might have been the history of this nation had he persisted in his first choice!

George now returned to school, where he re-

mained until within a few months of sixteen years of age; and, with a view to the future practice of surveying, of which he was quite fond already, he diligently pursued the study of mathematics, with geometry and trigonometry. Many of his manuscript drawings of surveys are still preserved, and are models of neatness and accuracy. He would survey the school fields, and prepare diagrams, describing their boundaries and extent with clearness and propriety. Nothing that he undertook was left half-done; but, with perseverance and order in all his plans, he furnishes a bright example to the boys, whose privilege it is now to study his character, and model their own after it.

It was, probably, about this time that he prepared a "Series of Rules for Behavior and Conversation," which, in his own neat handwriting, is still preserved at Mount Vernon. There are, also, with these, a few poetical pieces and scraps of letters, which show that, at this early period of his life, the great Washington was a lover, although, from his shyness and youthful diffidence, he never ventured to tell it to the lady thus honored. So he pined in silence, and wrote his sonnets, while in due course of time

she became the wife of another, who was older, and perhaps less modest.

The preference and affection which Lawrence Washington had always shown for his brother George had grown stronger since the death of their father, and the latter was very often a guest at Mount Vernon. Lawrence had settled down to the duties and occupations of a landed proprietor, holding an interest, also, in certain large iron furnaces on the Rappahannock. He was, besides these, a member of the House of Burgesses, which was the legislature of the colony of Virginia, and adjutant-general of the district, with a moderate salary.

A few miles below Mount Vernon was Belvoir, the beautiful residence of the Hon. William Fairfax, father-in-law of Lawrence Washington. Of course, there was a constant intercourse between the two families, and George became quite intimate with the various members of the Fairfax household.

To this fortunate acquaintance much of his successful advancement was to be attributed, as we shall see.

Mr. Fairfax was an English gentleman of high cultivation, and had filled many offices of

trust and honor under the crown, but had now taken up his residence at Belvoir, chiefly that he might manage the immense landed property of his cousin Lord Fairfax, who, though a man of much worth and generosity, was yet quite eccentric and peculiar.

His possessions extended from the Potomac to the Rappahannock, and reached as far as the Alleghany Mountains on the west.

About the time that George began to visit at Belvoir, the wealthy Lord Fairfax arrived there, from England, on a visit, intending to explore his great domain.

He was a bachelor of about sixty, and had inherited these lands from his mother, the daughter of Lord Culpepper, who had received the grant from King Charles II.

During a former visit, upon looking into the boundaries of the property, he had discovered that on the western border there was need of a more accurate settlement, as the head-waters of the Potomac started far above those of the Rappahannock. So he returned to England, and the question was finally arranged in such a manner as to give him also a portion of the Shenandoah valley.

But he was so much pleased with the climate and people of Virginia that he had now determined to make it his permanent home.

George Washington is described at this time as a manly youth, well-bred, and intelligent, though little more than sixteen years of age, and a great favorite with the proprietor, who made him his companion on many a fox-hunting expedition. With their English hounds, and fine horses, they would traverse the wild country for many miles around; and the youth's courage and skill in managing the spirited animals won the praise of the sport-loving nobleman.

But these expeditions led to others, more important by far to the future career of our hero. Lord Fairfax had observed his fondness and ability for surveying, and determined to employ his young friend in the extensive surveys of his large property, which were now to be made. His liberal offer was gladly accepted by George, and the preparations made for this hazardous expedition into the wild and almost unexplored wilderness, abounding not only with bears and wolves, but with hostile savages. However, these things were not likely to

deter a brave and active youth like George Washington, and, accordingly, in March, 1748, in company with George Fairfax, son of the Hon. William Fairfax, of Belvoir, he set out on horseback to cross the Blue Ridge.



CHAPTER V.

Perilous journey over the Blue Ridge—Adventures in the Wilderness—Indian dance—Exposures—Return to Mount Vernon—Delight of Lord Fairfax—His residence west of the mountains—Greenway Court—Washington receives his first appointment to office—Foundations for future success—Threatenings of war—French and English claims—The Ohio Company—Jealousy of the French—Preparations for war—Washington appointed adjutant-general of the militia—Takes lessons in military tactics—Failing health of his brother Lawrence—They go together to the West Indies—George has the small-pox—Lawrence comes home to die—His will.

WINTER was scarcely over, and the many mountain streams that lay in their way were swollen so as to be almost impassable; yet on they went through the beautiful valley of the Shenandoah, which was so called by the Indians themselves, and signifies “the daughter of the stars.”

His diary was kept very carefully as they went along, and recorded all items that were likely to interest Lord Fairfax—the quality of the soil, the character and localities of settlers,

and the relative value of the lands and improvements.

As they travelled on they would now and then come upon what were known as "clearings," where emigrants had settled, and cutting away the heavy timber, had built for themselves rude cabins of logs, and had for several years been raising fine crops of tobacco, hemp, and maize. But these rude huts were entirely devoid of the comforts now to be found in every poor man's home.

At night the travellers would gladly take refuge in one of them, if within reach; but often the accommodations were such that open-air privileges, with a nap on the ground before a fire, were to be preferred. The following extract from the diary will give one day and night's experience as backwoodsmen:

"15 *March*, 1748.—Worked hard till night, and then returned. After supper we were lighted into a room, and I, not being so good a woodsman as the rest, stripped myself very orderly and went into the bed, as they called it, when, to my surprise, I found it to be nothing but a little straw matted together, without sheet or anything else, but only one threadbare

blanket, with double its weight of vermin. I was glad to get up and put on my clothes, and lie as my companions did. Had we not been very tired, I am sure we should not have slept much that night. I made a promise to sleep no more, choosing rather to sleep in the open air before a fire."

One of the varieties of entertainment, which served to change the scene occasionally, occurred while they were stopping at the house of Colonel Cresap, near the Potomac river. A party of some thirty Indians, returning from one of their warlike expeditions, appeared at the place; and, after being well treated by the master, they made a fire upon an open space, and seated themselves around it. Then commenced the curious antics and contortions which constitute their grand war-dance, a spectacle which, having never before been witnessed by Washington, made a great impression on him.

Thus they proceeded on their way, crossing the swollen waters of the south branch of the Potomac in a canoe, and swimming their horses over. Then came a long tramp through the mountainous regions of Frederick County, all the time surveying and taking notes, while they



Washington on a Surveying Expedition.



lived entirely in the open air, and upon the wild-fowl and other game with which the region abounded. In his diary he tells of their experience in cooking, and of the very rough utensils which they were obliged to use for the purpose. Sometimes they were drenched with the rain; at others, the fire would not burn without smoking them in a most uncomfortable manner; and once the straw, on which Washington himself was sleeping, took fire, and he narrowly escaped with his life.

Once they took supper at the house of a justice of the peace, named Solomon Hedge; but there were no knives or forks to eat with, unless the guests had them of their own. This will give an idea of the style of living in those days, even among people who professed considerable gentility.

On the 12th of April, they returned from their perilous journey to Mount Vernon, and Lord Fairfax was greatly delighted with the manner in which the young surveyor had executed his task.

Soon after this, his lordship removed his residence across the Blue Ridge, and laid out a magnificent manor of ten thousand acres, giving

to the place the name of "Greenway Court." In the midst of this he intended to build a spacious dwelling-house ; but, until it was done, he took up his residence in the long one-story house, with steep roof and dormer windows, which was formerly occupied by one of his land-agents. Here were dispensed the hospitalities of Greenway Court ; but his lordship preferred sleeping alone in a small outbuilding, he being, as we have said, of an eccentric turn of mind.

Around the mansion-house were scattered the barns and stables, with buildings for the farmers and servants, and kennels for his hounds ; and every day a goodly number of dependants and strangers were partakers of his bountiful hospitality.

Through the influence of Lord Fairfax, Washington received the office of public surveyor, which was a source of great profit to him, and gave authority to his surveys. These were, of course, recorded in the county offices, and are at this day to be seen, their unquestionable correctness entitling them to universal credit.

In the sporting season, Washington continued to spend much time at Greenway Court, enjoying the company of Lord Fairfax in the excite-

ments of the chase ; but the three summers between his seventeenth and twentieth years were mostly occupied with the surveys of his lordship's estates, the winters being passed at Mount Vernon.

During those three important years, he was laying the foundations of his future success, for often did he meet with bands of friendly Indians, from whom he learned the ways and manners of the inhabitants of the forests. And when, in a few years afterward, the Indian war broke out, he knew every mile of the territory, the fordable places of the streams, and the best mountain-passes ; so as this was the very scene of warlike operations, his intimate knowledge of the whole region, gained during his surveying tours, was invaluable at that time of frequent surprises and daily perils.

It was during those three years, while Washington was engaged in his mountain expeditions, that signs of an approaching outbreak between the French and their Indian allies on the one side, and the British settlers on the other, became evident and threatening. There had been a general war in Europe, existing for several years, which had just been ended by

the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, but strangely enough, in settling other matters, the French and English had forgotten to agree upon the boundary lines between their respective possessions in America. Each nation was therefore anxious to lay claim to certain rich territories, and each, of course, gave some good reasons for thus asserting its rights.

The English claimed to have purchased the whole tract lying between the Alleghany mountains and the Mississippi river from the Indians in 1744, for the sum of four hundred pounds. The French rested their claims on the previous discovery of the territory by certain representatives of that nation, who, in the year 1673, had sailed down the Mississippi, in a canoe, to the mouth of the Arkansas River, and they therefore considered themselves the owners of that great river, and all its tributary streams, with the lands on both sides for many miles back.

As the Ohio was one of these tributaries, it will be seen that the claim was a large one, and it was difficult for settlers to know to which of the two governments their allegiance was due, while the Indians, whose claims were certainly

prior to either party, were altogether left out of the question, or else expected to take sides with one of the disputants.

Not a single white settlement had yet been made west of the Alleghanies, so that the land in question was in reality occupied by the original savages, and these the French endeavored to win over to their side by all means in their power.

But an independent party of fur-traders, from Pennsylvania, had already established quite an extensive trade with the Indians, who inhabited the lands bordering on the Ohio. They were accustomed to set out with a large train of horses and mules laden with trinkets, gay cloth, powder and shot, and rum, which the savages were glad to take in exchange for their valuable furs.

In time this had become a lucrative trade, and it was no wonder that other parties desired to share in the same. This was the case with some of the most enterprising and respectable men in Maryland and Virginia, who set on foot a scheme for starting settlements along the Ohio River, beyond the Alleghanies.

They readily obtained a grant of five hun-

dred thousand acres, for which they were to pay no rent for ten years, but were to settle upon it as many families as possible, and also to build a fort, and garrison it at their own expense, which was deemed necessary as a protection against the Indians.

This was chartered by the British government in 1749, and named the "Ohio Company," and among other prominent citizens, who aided and encouraged the scheme, were Lawrence and Augustine Washington—the former being at one time its chief manager.

The company at once began to import goods suited to the tastes and fancies of their Indian customers, and everything looked promising, when the jealous French in Canada became aware of their plans, and early in the same year that the charter was granted a delegation of three hundred men came down to the banks of the Ohio, with tempting gifts, as bribes for the Indians. They told them of their friendship and regard, and warned them not to trade with the English, who were their enemies, at the same time nailing up plates against the trees, on which were inscribed the claims of France to the whole region. One of these

plates was recently found buried in the ground, near the mouth of the Muskingum.

But the Indians did not like the looks of these plates, and chose to continue their friendship and allegiance to the English, who soon sent a man named Gist to explore the lands of the Ohio Company, and offer the friendly savages both presents and protection.

On the other hand, the persevering efforts of the French had been successful in bringing over some tribes to their side, and prospects grew more and more threatening, until in Virginia preparations were made for open war.

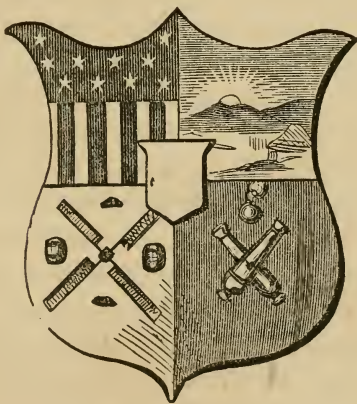
As a preliminary step, the province was divided into military districts, and an adjutant-general, having the rank and pay of major, was allotted to each, who was intrusted with all the militia arrangements and the enlisting of men. To one of these posts George Washington was appointed, being at the time only nineteen years old : but his former military ardor returned with this first occasion for its active exercise ; and, under the instructions of a certain Adjutant Morse and Jacob Van Braam, who had served with his brother Lawrence in the late attack on Carthagera, he gave up his whole attention, for

a little while, to the study of military tactics at Mount Vernon.

But in the midst of these studies, his brother Lawrence's health began to fail, and symptoms of consumption were apparent. A milder climate for the ensuing winter was therefore ordered by the physician ; and, with George as a companion, he sailed for Barbadoes, in September, 1751. Very soon after their arrival, George was attacked with small-pox, and had the disease quite severely, being considerably marked by it during the rest of his life.

The warm climate, lovely fruits, and sea-breezes, brought no relief, however, to the invalid, and he missed the society of his wife ; so George was sent back to bring her out to Bermuda, where Lawrence was to join them in the spring. But before they had sailed from Virginia, a letter from him announced his intention of returning home to die, which, alas, proved to be no vain foreboding, for he arrived just in time to die among his family, in his own home at Mount Vernon. On the 26th of July, and in the thirty-fourth year of his age, this noble and well-beloved brother breathed his last, regretted and honored by all who knew him.

By his will, the property at Mount Vernon was left to his infant daughter ; but in case of her death without heirs, and after the death of his widow, it was to go to his favorite brother George, who was named as one of the executors of the estate, a trust which he managed with entire satisfaction and fidelity.



CHAPTER VI.

Return to military life—Building forts—Perilous journey—Dangers and escapes—Orders for raising troops—Washington appointed lieutenant-colonel—The Seven Years' War—First battle—Reverses—Washington in command of the regiment—General Braddock's insolence to Washington—His death—Washington returns to his home—Receives the commendations of Congress.

BOTH the French and British governments had now set about the preparations for war in good earnest, and forts were being erected at different points by the two parties, who, with their Indian allies, were scattered over the valleys of the Alleghany, Monongahela, and Ohio rivers, with some of its other eastern tributaries.

The French built one on French Creek, about fifteen miles south of Lake Erie, and the Virginians began theirs at the forks of the Ohio, formed by the confluence of the two rivers Alleghany and Monongahela, where the city of Pittsburgh now stands.

On the 14th of November, Major Washington, who had now resumed his military duties, set

out, at the request of Governor Dinwiddie, to traverse the five hundred miles of wilderness that lay between his home and the post of the French commandant. The accounts given in the diary of this perilous journey are very thrilling, and the Providential escapes from destruction by fire and flood, the treachery of the Indian guides, and the intense cold, may well impress us with a feeling of wonder, and thankfulness to the wise and omnipotent Father, who thus watched over and protected the head of the future Republic. The Indians themselves, who had so often taken deadly aim at him, but whose murderous assaults had always failed in their purpose, declared that he led a charmed life, and the Great Spirit was preserving him for some unknown end.

But notwithstanding the dangers that beset their way, he and his attendants reached the post in safety, delivered the despatches, and, convinced that there was still greater danger in delay, set out on their return as soon as possible. Again the journal tells of the hazardous canoes, and drifting ice, as they came down the rivers, and the long marches which they were forced to take because their horses were almost

in a dying state, and could not carry more than the provisions and equipments.

On one occasion they worked with "one poor hatchet," for a whole day, in order to construct a raft, on which they might cross the rapid Alleghany River, it being frozen partly over, with great blocks of floating ice drifting down the current. When it was launched they went on board of it, but "before we were half-way over," says the journal, "we were jammed in the ice in such a manner that we expected every moment the raft would sink, and ourselves perish. I put out my setting-pole to try to stop the raft, that the ice might pass by, when the rapidity of the stream threw it with so much violence against the pole, that it jerked me out into ten feet water. But I fortunately saved myself by catching hold of one of the raft logs. Notwithstanding all our efforts, we could not get the raft to either shore, but were obliged, as we were near an island, to quit our raft and make to it."

Here, again, Providence interfered, and they were preserved, for, after remaining all night upon the island, without any protection but the blankets in which they rolled themselves to

sleep upon the snow, they crossed upon the newly-formed ice, which happily by this time was strong enough to bear their weight, and, after a few hours' further march, reached a trading-post, where they remained to rest for a few days. On this spot, eighteen months afterward, the battle of Monongahela was fought.

On the 16th of January, after an absence of eleven weeks, Major Washington, together with his staunch friend, Mr. Gist, arrived at Williamsburg, then the capital of Virginia.

Governor Dinwiddie now perceived that the Canadians intended to prevent all further extension of British interests along the Ohio, and immediately issued orders for a force to be raised and prepared for service. Virginia was called on for six companies, and Washington appointed lieutenant-colonel, being too modest to take the chief command.

Colonel Fry was at the head of the regiment, and they were pushed on with all speed, in order to reach the Ohio River before the French should come down, which they had threatened to do as soon as the spring opened.

When the regiment reached Wills' Creek, they learned that the French had overwhelmed

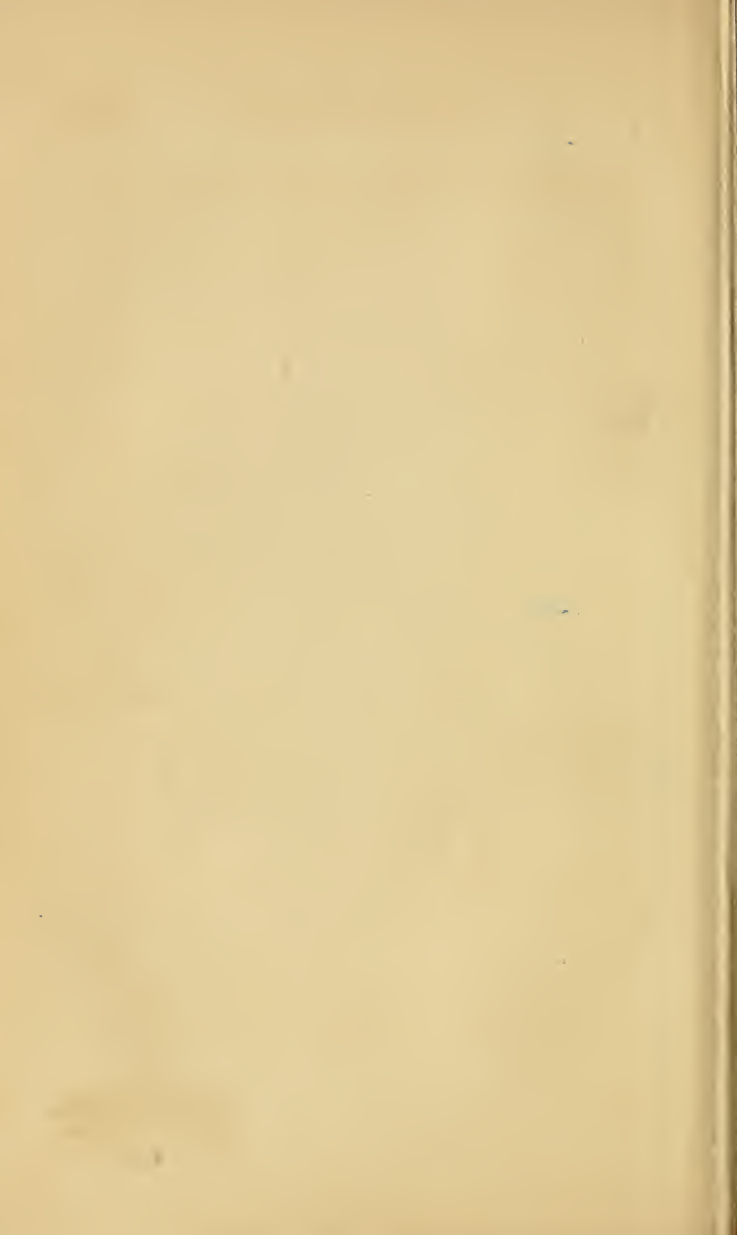
and driven away Captain Trent's party from the fort they were building at the forks of the Ohio River, and had taken possession of the unfinished work. This they afterward completed, and named it Fort Duquesne, in honor of the governor of Canada.

Colonel Washington did not hesitate a moment after hearing this news, but hurried on, and soon received information of an intended attack upon them, which the French were then meditating. As there was no time to be lost, he took the head of the little band of fifty men, and a few friendly Indians, and, marching all night, by morning they came up with the enemy, who were completely surprised. A fight ensued, which resulted in the death of the French commander, M. Jumonville, and ten of his men, while the rest of the party, twenty-two in number, were made prisoners and sent to Virginia.

This was the first battle of the great Seven Years' War, and the young colonel was now only twenty-two years of age. Returning to Great Meadows, where they had already thrown up such intrenchments as the time and their means would allow, the defences were at once strength-



Washington listening to an old Soldier's Story.



ened, and soon assumed the proportions and appearance of a respectable fort. Owing to the circumstances that had obliged its construction, they named it Fort Necessity.

The death of M. Jumonville caused much excitement, both in Canada and in France, and it was spoken of in the papers as the murder of a peaceable citizen. As Colonel Washington expected, a large force was sent against them, probably in order to avenge his death, which overtook and attacked the Virginians just as they had returned from Gist's settlement, thirteen miles distant, and when they were almost within reach of their fort. They were, of course, overpowered, and obliged to retreat within its walls, where terms of capitulation were agreed upon. By a strange coincidence, this first reverse occurred on the now memorable 4th of July, just twenty-two years before the Declaration of Independence.

It was a sore trial to the young officer, who, by the recent death of Colonel Fry, was now in full command of the regiment, but not a word of blame was heard; he had done the best he could with the small means under his control, and until help should arrive from England

(which was sent during the next year), they could scarcely hope for better success.

When General Braddock arrived with his two regiments of royal troops, he joined the Virginia volunteers, and took command of the army, treating with marked disrespect Colonel Washington's well-deserved reputation ; but he gladly accepted his services as aid-de-camp.

The British officer was a brave man, but considered himself, as a regular in the royal army, far above the mere volunteer in importance, although the young Virginian's knowledge of the wild country around them could by no means be spared in the present campaign. No wonder that Washington was disgusted with all this, but his desire to help his country's cause overbalanced even his pride, and he submitted to the position and services assigned to him.

The summer of 1755 had now opened, and found them on the march over the mountain toward Fort Duquesne, confident of a victory, provided they could reach that point before the enemy was re-enforced.

But Colonel Washington was taken extremely ill at Great Meadows, and most unwillingly remained behind—General Braddock promising

to send for him before the action should take place, which promise he gladly kept.

On the morning of the 9th of July, when they were yet several miles from the fort, they were attacked by an advance of the enemy which had been sent out from Fort Duquesne, and now fired upon the British columns from an ambush on the side of a hill. This unexpected attack from an unseen enemy produced a general panic among the troops, and they fell back in great confusion, which all the efforts of the officers could not remedy. There they remained, huddled together, firing irregularly, and after the Indian fashion, "each man for himself behind a tree."

During the three hours that this damaging state of things continued, the French and Indians were keeping up a deadly fire upon the panic-stricken soldiers, taking deliberate aim at the officers, until they had killed many of the bravest of them, and General Braddock himself received a mortal wound. Of the three aids-de-camp who accompanied him into battle, Washington was the only one who escaped, and of the whole army, which only a few hours before crossed the river in high spirits,

on their way, as they supposed, to victory, more than half were killed or wounded.

In a letter, written by Washington to his brother John Augustine, he speaks thus of the battle: "By the all-powerful dispensation of Providence I have been protected beyond all human probability or expectation; for I had four bullets through my coat, and two horses shot under me; yet I escaped unhurt, although death was levelling my companions on every side."

But on the enemy's side the loss was very small; for they were concealed and protected by the deep ravines and rocks, and the British balls passed harmlessly over their heads. Had General Braddock taken Washington's advice, and accepted the offered services of the friendly Indians, as scouts, to go before the main body of the troops, they would have spied out the concealed enemy, and might have entirely prevented the disasters of the day; but he placed the greatest reliance on his trained soldiers, who truly might have shown to advantage on a level battle-field, yet were utterly unable to match the rude backwoodsmen and Indians, whose lives had been spent in the forest, and whose

mode of warfare was according to a very different method of tactics. Thus, his folly and obstinacy cost him his life; for four days after this bloody fight (known in history as the battle of the Monongahela) he died in the arms of his soldiers, and was buried by the road-side, near Fort Necessity, the straggling remnant of the army afterward making the best of its way to Fort Cumberland, at Wills' Creek.

At the first appearance of General Braddock's haughty treatment, soon after his arrival in the country, to which we have before alluded, Col. Washington had resigned his commission, and returned to Mount Vernon; but, through the urgent invitation of that repentant officer, who had by that time learned to know his worth, the young patriot had accepted the office of *aid-de-camp*. Of course the duties of the appointment ended with the life of General Braddock, and Washington returned once more to his quiet home, much enfeebled by his late illness, and the arduous labors that had succeeded it.

As might naturally be supposed, though entirely unsought by him, this memorable defeat drew forth the loudest comments of the government; and while it brought blame and reproach

upon the unfortunate leaders of the expedition, it bore the name of Washington still higher in the estimation of his countrymen. Providence had permitted this catastrophe; and, as we have often seen in other cases, that which was then so deeply regretted became really a source of blessing to the land. Had the result been different, the laurels which Washington unquestionably deserved would have been given to another, while his full abilities and energy were suffered to lie dormant, because overshadowed by a superior authority.



CHAPTER VII.

Washington's patriotism—He is appointed commander of the Army of Virginia—Difficulty in transporting troops and material for war—Fears of the people—Indian outrages—Another defeat—Capture of Fort Duquesne—Its ruins repaired and strengthened—Other successes—The French lose their American possessions—Washington retires from military life—His marriage—Quiet life at Mount Vernon—Growing encroachments of England—Taxations—Complaints of the people—The Stamp Act—Refusal to use British goods—The tea in Boston harbor—The Continental Congress—Warlike opinions—Boston blockaded by a British fleet—Washington appointed commander-in-chief.

WASHINGTON'S connection with the army was now over; and, on summing up the results of his experience as a soldier thus far, he found them rather discouraging than otherwise, for both his pocket and health had suffered considerably in all the hazardous expeditions of the last few years. His mother urged him to withdraw from military duty, and no longer risk his life on the frontiers; but to this he could not agree, when the voice of his countrymen called him to the command of the Army of Virginia.

The news of his appointment reached him on the 14th of August, 1755, and on the 14th of September he established his headquarters at Winchester, a central point, from which he could direct the movements of the army and the transmission of supplies.

But how different were the facilities for all these preparations at that time compared with those of the present! No railroads nor steamboats to convey the heavy artillery and troops, nor even good wagon-roads, and bridges over the streams; all was to be taken through the forest or swamps, fording the rivers, and dragging the baggage over the steep sides of the mountains for hundreds of miles. Besides all these difficulties, it was hard to persuade the settlers to enlist in the war, against such formidable enemies as the French and Indians, especially since the last disastrous battle; they thought there was enough for them to do at home in keeping off the incursions of the savages, who were constantly making war on their defenceless plantations.

Various exciting rumors would arise to awaken the fears of the people, and so great was the panic, that sometimes two or three negroes seen

by the wayside were magnified into an armed body of savages, nor could these fears (too often correct) be quieted until the scouts sent out by Washington to search the country returned with the news that the band of Indians which had occasioned their terror had retreated across the mountains with their booty and captives. These savages were some who had joined the French cause since Braddock's defeat, being ready to share in the spoils of victory.

These visits and alarms were oft-repeated and constant, until the people came thronging to Washington for his protection, which, alas, it was out of his power to give, for want of men and means.

So passed the years 1756 and 1757, without any very important event, except continued small victories won by the French on the northern frontier; but they were full of wearing care and anxiety to the Virginian commander, who was himself finally prostrated for several months with severe illness.

In 1758, another unsuccessful attack was made upon Fort Duquesne, and a scene very much like Braddock's defeat occurred, the two chief officers in the expedition only saving their lives

by a surrender. This second defeat was entirely owing to the bad management of Captain Grant, the leader, and also to the disregard of Washington's advice; the obstinate and conceited commander-in-chief, General Forbes, insisting upon opening a new road through Pennsylvania, instead of going by the old and more familiar track which had been travelled so often before.

But victory yet awaited the perseverance of the Virginian troops, and although it was now nearly winter, Washington himself led the advance of the army in a third attack, approaching with great caution the formidable fort, whose capture had been twice before unsuccessfully attempted. Contrary to their expectation, the prize was easily taken, the French having evacuated and set fire to it the day before.

On the 25th of November, Washington took possession of the ruins, and then, as a first duty, they all set about the work of collecting and burying the bones of the poor soldiers who had fallen under Braddock and Grant, for they were scattered on the ground for miles around the fort. They next proceeded to rebuild the ruins, which were soon put into a tolerably strong state, changing the name to Fort Pitt, in honor

of the distinguished British minister of those days. From that grew the name of Pittsburg, which stands on the same ground.

When this important point was occupied, the chief object of the campaign was gained, for the whole southern frontier was now in possession of the English, and the Indians soon deserted the French cause, and made a treaty of peace with the British settlers, leaving the Ohio river in their peaceable possession.

The taking of Fort Duquesne was followed by other important successes on the part of the English. In July, 1759, several expeditions were undertaken, which ended in the taking of Fort Niagara, Ticonderoga, Crown Point, the surrender of Quebec (at which last both the French and English commanders, the brave Montcalm and the gallant Wolfe, were slain); and, finally, the capitulation not only of Montreal, but of the whole of Canada. Thus the French lost all their possessions in America, and the English were now supreme owners of the soil.

Immediately after the taking of Fort Duquesne, Washington withdrew from military life, and retired to the estate at Mount Vernon, which

had become his upon the death of the widow and daughter of his brother Lawrence, and began his preparations for a life of domestic happiness by marrying Mrs. Martha Custis, widow of John Parke Custis, Esq., to whom he had been for some time engaged.

She is described as a beautiful woman, young, and very wealthy, and the mother of two children, a boy aged six, and a girl four years old.

The estate of Mount Vernon had been increased by purchase of other lands, until it now embraced six thousand acres of fields, lawns, and woodlands, with fine hunting-grounds and fisheries. The house had been enlarged and embellished before his marriage, and was beautifully situated on a lovely hill, as it stands to this day, overlooking the Potomac river.

He was a vestryman in both the neighboring parishes, and the little church which he mostly attended at Pohich was rebuilt by him. Whenever the roads permitted, he was in attendance at one or the other of them, a devout and attentive worshipper, being always interested in whatever related to the church's prosperity.

Here, for seventeen years, he passed his time in superintending these large estates, at the



Washington before he was Commander-in-Chief.



same time being a member of the Legislature, or House of Burgesses, and interesting himself in many schemes for the public good. But while he was thus enjoying the retirement of his pleasant home, he was not unmindful of what was passing around him,—of the heavy taxations, encroachments, and oppressions of England, which were becoming greater and greater year by year, until finally they passed the bounds of patient endurance, and ended in an open opposition.

The professed object of this taxation was the payment of the debt incurred by the recent French and Indian war, and the colonial legislatures were justly indignant at the means taken for doing it. The home government was wealthy, and possessed ample resources for raising the money, while the colonies were new, and unable to manufacture even the common articles which were needed in every family; so the plan of taxing all importations for these purposes was resorted to, and raised the first sparks of that resentment which finally led to their independence.

The people now with one voice refused to import British merchandise, and throughout the

whole country homespun garments became the order of the day, while constant complaints and petitions were sent to England, and brought before Parliament. But all these remonstrances were in vain; instead of lessening the evils, greater ones were added. In March, 1765, the Stamp Act was passed, which required that all legal writings should be executed upon stamped paper, which of course could only be had of the British Government agents.

These acts of injustice and oppression became the subjects of discussion in the legislative bodies of the various colonies; and even in Virginia, where the strictest loyalty to the Crown had always prevailed, were heard the plainest outcries for American liberty.

Various plans were next resorted to with a view to conciliate the Americans; some of the duties were lightened, and others entirely removed, but the principle upon which the colonies objected to this taxation was still unrecognized; they were taxed without their consent, and nothing less than a removal of the whole grievance would pacify the uneasy spirit that was now awake.

One important article that had been largely

used in the colonies was tea ; and now that all had refused to buy it, the East India Company in England, who had large warehouses full to sell, were in some perplexity on account of the falling off in the demand, and thinking that removing a part of the duty would remedy the difficulty, Parliament passed a bill which allowed them to export it to America without paying export duty. They of course imagined that the Americans would now purchase it in large quantities, so they sent over several ship-loads to different ports.

From some places they were sent back without being permitted to unload ; in others, it was stored away, but never used ; and in Boston, the tea was quietly poured into the harbor, and the empty vessels sent back to England. This, of course, caused great indignation there ; and it was now plainly seen that the people were united in opposing the whole system of taxation. From North to South there was a feeling of perfect agreement ; and when, in a few months afterward, the Boston port-bill was passed, closing the port of Boston, with other outrageous encroachments on the liberties of the people, the whole country was filled with resentment ;

and in the Virginia House of Burgesses resolutions were passed which so alarmed the Governor, Lord Dunmore, that he dissolved the House.

But this could not quiet the spirit which was now aroused; and the Burgesses at once retired to another chamber, where they discussed matters more fully, and proposed to the other colonies the plan of holding a general Congress, for the purpose of united action in the common interests of all.

This proposition was well received; and on the 5th of September, 1774, the first Continental Congress assembled in Carpenter's Hall, Philadelphia. George Washington was present, with some others of the best and ablest sons of Virginia; and from all parts of the land were sent those whose eloquence and energy was to make their names, as well as their acts, immortal.

History tells of the great solemnity that pervaded that Congress; of the devout prayer with which it was opened, and the feeling of awe that was everywhere present; but, as the meetings were held with closed doors, there is no record of its proceedings. The few state papers written by its members, and published afterward,

are, however, master-pieces of eloquence and ability.

Matters were now growing more and more warlike in their appearance, and already the British troops, under General Gage, had occupied Boston Common, while a fleet of ships blockaded the harbor.

The time for action had come, and on the 15th of June, 1775, Washington was unanimously elected commander-in-chief of the Continental Army, as it was then named, a trust which he very modestly accepted, expressing his fear that he would be found unequal to the task. On the 3d of July he took command of the army, at Cambridge, Mass.



CHAPTER VIII.

Battle of Lexington—Revolutionary spirit aroused—Gen. Putnam's patriotism—General Washington appoints his officers—Arrival of more ships and troops from England—Boston besieged by the patriots—Battle of Bunker's Hill.

BUT we must go back a little while. It was in April, 1775, about two months previous to Washington's appointment to the chief command, that the first blow was struck at Lexington. General Gage, who still occupied Boston with his four thousand troops, determined to send a deputation to Concord, twenty miles distant, for the purpose of destroying the military stores there held by the patriots.

On the night of the 18th, they started in boats, from the foot of Boston Common, and crossed to Cambridge, from whence they were to march silently on, so as not to alarm the country through which they passed.

But one of the leaders of the people's party, Dr. Warren, had observed the boats, and, suspecting mischief, had despatched two messengers

to give the alarm. At the same time a lantern was hung out of a high church window, a signal which had been before agreed on.

As Colonel Smith, with his nine hundred British troops, marched on toward Concord, they heard the ringing of the village bells and the firing of alarm-guns, showing that their movements were already known, and the people ready for them ; so he quickly sent back to Gen. Gage for more help. In answer to the request, Major Pitcairn, with six companies, came on, in hopes of securing the bridges at Concord before the alarm should reach there.

But the village of Lexington lay in his way ; and by the time he reached the centre of that little town, a goodly number of the sturdy farmers had assembled, armed with the best guns they could collect. When the gallant major saw how matters stood, he drew up his men, and ordered them to load their guns ; then waving his sword with an air of great authority, he called on the "rebels" to disperse. As may be supposed, the orders were not obeyed, and according to Pitcairn's account, the first shot was fired by the patriots ; however that may be, the red-coats poured a volley into their ranks, and succeeded

in killing and wounding eighteen of them, and scattering the remainder.

The number of the Americans was seventy or eighty, and of the British troops nearly nine hundred, which easily accounted for the victory in which they so greatly rejoiced.

At Concord they destroyed all the arms they could find, but the timely alarm given by Warren's messengers had enabled the people to remove and conceal a good part of them; and while the work of destruction was going on, the patriots were assembling on a little hill overlooking the town. Considerable skirmishing ensued, during which the American spirit and energy were displayed, and some damage done to the enemy, who now took up their retreat towards Boston, having been joined by reinforcements under Lord Percy, which General Gage had despatched to the aid of Colonel Smith.

Up to this time the Americans were without a leader, and were acting in the ardor of their enthusiasm, though without much system or management. In this state of affairs General Heath, and Dr. Warren, who had just been appointed a general, arrived and took command,

marshalling the men and soon bringing them into something like military order. When the British army, under Lord Percy, began their march toward Boston, the Americans pursued them with a harassing fire in the rear, until when the worn-out troops reached Gage's headquarters, they had lost in killed, wounded, and missing two hundred and seventy-three, including eighteen officers—the loss of the patriots being forty-nine killed and forty-four wounded and missing.

The first blood had now been spilt in the cause of liberty, and the spirit of revolution was abroad throughout the land; everywhere the old soldiers of the French war were ready to start again to arms.

Washington's old companion on the frontiers, Colonel Israel Putnam, was ploughing in his field when he heard of the battle at Lexington, and without stopping to put away his plough, or go to his house, he took the horse from its harness, and, mounting on its back, rode off with all speed to join in the struggle.

At the same time, in another direction, Crown Point and Ticonderoga, with other points which gave complete command of the

lakes, Champlain and George, had also been surprised and captured by a party from Vermont, who called themselves the "Green Mountain Boys," and were under the leadership of Ethan Allen and Benedict Arnold.

Such was the state of affairs when, at the opening of the second Congress, Washington was elected the Commander-in-chief.

Of course things were in a state which would not admit of delay, and he at once selected and appointed the officers who were to serve under him. General Ward, then commanding in Boston, was to be next in rank to himself, and General Charles Lee the third: two other major-generals—Philip Schuyler and Israel Putnam, with eight brigadier-generals, and Horatio Gates, adjutant-general, with the rank of brigadier. Both Lee and Gates had been officers in the British army, but were out of commission, and living for some years past on their estates in Virginia. All the others were American born.

Within a few weeks several ships-of-war had come from England, bringing more troops, under the command of Generals Burgoyne, Howe, and Clinton, and great hopes of success

were now entertained by General Gage and the rest. They scorned the ability of mere yeomen and undisciplined soldiers to withstand the scientific efforts of the British officers and troops, and they sailed into Boston harbor in fine spirits.

At the time these re-enforcements arrived, the patriotic army had besieged Boston, with the intention of keeping the British shut up in the city. No provisions from the country around were permitted to enter it; and, as this had continued for some time, it was becoming rather uncomfortable to the Britishers.

On the night of the 16th of June, 1775, the Americans marched around the city to Bunker's Hill, intending to fortify it; but, by a misunderstanding, the neighboring height, called Breed's Hill, was selected, and before morning intrenchments had been thrown up, behind which a force was planted, much to the surprise of the British, who at daylight could see them plainly from their ships in the harbor.

A few shots were fired by the vessels, which soon alarmed General Gage, and he immediately embarked a large force, which was commanded by General Howe, and landed near Breed's Hill,

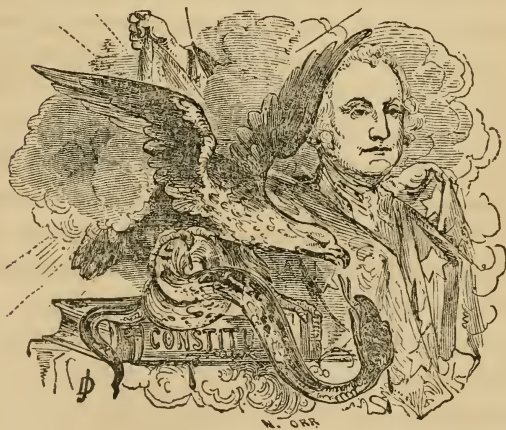
about one o'clock on the 17th. After carefully observing the fortifications, he sent to General Gage for more troops and ammunition, thus making preparation for a vigorous assault.

The Americans, however, were not idle either; for, while the enemy waited, their own re-enforcements came up, and further intrenchments were made on Bunker's Hill, and behind them, ready to do good service for their country, were some of the bravest men that ever lived, although they did not wear red coats, nor were called regulars. The fearless Warren, Putnam, Prescott, Stark, and others, were there, and directed the little garrison with such judgment and effect, that three times the enemy were driven down the hill, with dreadful loss. Their ammunition was now nearly exhausted, and finally, after the fourth attack, they were obliged to retreat from their works, the brave General Warren falling dead as they turned to leave the hill.

This was the first regular battle of the war, and but for the want of means to continue the defence, must have ended in a victory to the American side; as it was, the British might well feel mortified at the result, for their best and boasted troops had been overmatched by a far

inferior force of mere yeomanry, whose skill they had so much despised. Out of their whole detachment of two thousand men, they had lost one thousand and four, the American loss being about four hundred and fifty.

Among the British officers who fell in the action was Pitcairn, who had led the royal troops, and shed the first blood at Lexington.



CHAPTER IX.

Washington takes the head of the army—General Howe's expedition—His fleet sails to North Carolina—Sad news from Canada—Discouragements—British evacuate Boston—Washington goes to New York—He expresses his views to Congress—Independence must be obtained—Secret plot discovered and defeated—Arrival of General Howe's fleet in New York harbor—Declaration of Independence—No longer called "Colonies"—Title of "United States" adopted—Proposals of pardon from the crown—Rejected by Congress—Scarcity of supplies—Superiority of the British army in numbers and equipments—Battle of Long Island—Troops removed from Long Island—Americans evacuate New York.

GENERAL WASHINGTON had started from Philadelphia on the 21st of June, to take the head of the army at Cambridge, in company with Generals Schuyler and Lee. The former was to be placed in command of New York and its surroundings, while the latter accompanied Washington to Cambridge.

They had proceeded but a few miles beyond the starting-place, when they had the first news of the battle of Bunker's Hill, and, as might be supposed, they made all haste to reach their

destination. At New York the full particulars were ascertained; and Washington was delighted to hear of the brave conduct of the Americans, exclaiming with confidence, "The liberties of the country are safe!"

At New York, as in every town and village through which they passed, there was an outpouring of patriotic joy at the sight of the Commander-in-chief, whose tall and elegant figure on horseback drew forth the admiration of the assembled crowds. The shouts of the militia and citizens, as he entered the camp, showed how great was the confidence of the people in their new chief, and were heard within the enemy's quarters, in the besieged city, three miles off.

About the end of the year it became evident that General Howe was preparing for some secret expedition, as the ships in the harbor were being fitted out as if for a voyage. Of course the American commander could only guess at their intentions, but had good reason to fear that New York would be the aim of the enemy; and that city was the great headquarters of the Tories, as those Americans were called who still adhered to the king's side. Their lodgment

there was to be prevented if possible, so Gen. Lee was dispatched to New York with instructions to General Schuyler, calling on him to lose no time in raising men in New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut, who were to be marshalled for the defence of the city.

The importance of this point was very great, because it commanded the Hudson River, by which direct communication could be had with Canada and the northern provinces. But this time they were mistaken in the designs of the enemy, who soon sailed out of Boston harbor with several regiments of troops, under General Clinton, and went to North Carolina, intending to surprise and take possession of that province.

While Washington was busy in providing for the defence of New York, a request was sent from Canada for more troops to be sent there, with the sad news of the death of the brave Gen. Montgomery, and the repulse at Quebec.

If ever discouragement was warranted and excusable it would have been now, for the supply of men was far too small for the present calls, and it seemed impossible to spare any either from New York or Boston, while the number of arms was not sufficient to give each man

a gun, even by borrowing, buying, and begging every rusty firelock in the land. Yet there was no hesitation on the part of Washington. He felt the awful importance of the effort they were making, and there was no time for faint-heartedness.

An attack on Boston was now determined on by the American commander, and with a view to this end Dorchester Heights were fortified, by which the command of the harbor was secured, while Washington prepared to assault the town from the other side at the same time. His secret desire, however, was to compel the British to evacuate the city, which they were permitted to do without molestation, having promised on these conditions not to burn the town or injure the inhabitants. On the 17th of March, 1776, they embarked on board their remaining ships, and sailed away to Halifax, leaving General Putnam to take quiet possession of the city. This enabled Washington to spare a large portion of the troops at Boston for other places, and a considerable number were at once sent to New York, which was the largest and most important city, while several regiments were despatched to Canada.

Washington himself went down to inspect the defences of New York, and devise new ones, and afterward proceeded to Philadelphia to meet the Congress there.

He was now well satisfied that there could be no reconciliation with the English Government, and that nothing short of independence was worth the attention of Congress; but a few timid members urged the propriety of waiting a little longer for the arrival of proposals, which it was said were even then on their way across the ocean.

After expressing his views in the most decided manner, Washington hastened back to New York to carry out his plans and preparations for defence; and his presence was highly necessary, not only because of the foreign foe which was expected soon to arrive in the harbor, but on account of the active Tories, who, with Gov. Tryon at their head, were devising every possible means for the injury and defeat of the patriot cause.

A secret plot was discovered, whose object was the capture of Washington, with other similar atrocious acts, while their agents were detected in enticing away American soldiers

from the camps. Prompt measures were adopted for suppressing the mischief, and several of the ringleaders were imprisoned.

On the 28th of June the expected fleet of the enemy arrived in New York harbor, and General Howe made his headquarters on Staten Island.

Such was the state of affairs when, on the 4th of July, that day ever to be memorable in the history of our country, the Declaration of Independence was issued from the Continental Congress, at Philadelphia.

As soon as it was received at the headquarters, Washington ordered the whole body of troops to be paraded, and had the document read aloud. At the conclusion a shout of joy went up from the united band, and the orders of the Commander-in-chief were read also—concluding with these emphatic words: “The General hopes that this important event will serve as a fresh incentive to every officer and soldier to act with fidelity and courage, as knowing that now the peace and safety of his country depend, under God, solely on the success of our arms, and that he is now in the service of a State possessed of sufficient power

to reward his merit, and advance him to the highest honors of a free country."

From this time the word "colonies" was dropped, and the name and title of the "United States of America" became the proud boast of patriots.

About the middle of July, Lord Howe, brother of the British general, arrived with the expected offers from the crown; but they consisted merely in a promise of pardon to those who would return to their allegiance, without a word in regard to the grievances complained of. Of course it was quite too late to listen to any propositions of this kind, for the watchword had gone forth — "Independence — now and forever."

General Howe's army amounted at this time to twenty-four thousand men, with ships, guns, and military stores enough to make a formidable display. General Washington had altogether about twenty thousand men, but no ships, poor arms, and few military equipments or stores. There were few tents, and this was the sickly season of August, so that a considerable number were unfit for service; besides this, the men were scattered over a space of fifteen miles, the

enemy being still concentrated on Staten Island, opposite the city.

At this time, to increase the difficulties of their situation, symptoms of jealousy appeared amongst the American soldiers, which called forth the earnest persuasions of the commander. In one of the daily orders he thus addressed them: "The general most earnestly entreats the officers and soldiers to consider the consequences; that they can in no way assist our enemies more effectually than by making divisions among ourselves; that the honor and success of the army, and the safety of our bleeding country, depend upon harmony and good agreement with each other; that the provinces are all united to oppose the common enemy, and all distinctions sunk in the name of an American. To make this name honorable, and to preserve the liberty of our country, ought to be our only emulation; and he will be the best soldier and the best patriot who contributes most to this glorious work, whatever his station, or from whatever part of the continent he may come. Let all distinctions of nations, countries, and provinces, therefore, be lost in the generous contest who shall behave with the most courage against

the enemy, and the most kindness and good-humor to each other."

By this we plainly perceive that Washington did not believe in the doctrine of "States' rights" when the interests of the Union were at stake.

They were now expecting an attack from the British, and as the latter had ships which could convey them to any point desired, it was necessary to keep every exposed quarter guarded, not knowing where they would strike. But at length they were seen landing on Long Island, where Washington had already erected fortifications at Brooklyn, and placed there a detachment of militia under General Putnam.

On the 27th of August there was a battle, in which the American troops, five thousand in number, under General Putnam, Lord Stirling, and General Sullivan, were overpowered by the enemy, fifteen thousand strong, who attacked them in the rear, being led by Lord Cornwallis, Lord Percy, and General Clinton. After a brave resistance they were obliged to surrender, having sustained a heavy loss, with two of their generals, Stirling and Sullivan, taken prisoners.

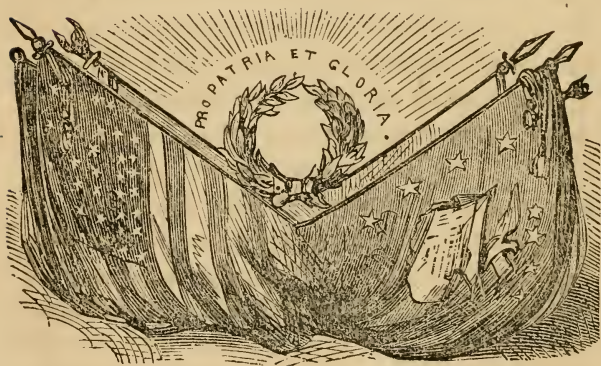
A council of war was held after the battle, and it was determined to withdraw all the American

troops from Long Island, lest they should be cut off from the mainland by the fleet of ships anchored near by. This retreat was successfully accomplished after midnight on the 29th; the whole army of nine thousand men, with the military stores and artillery, were conveyed across the East River in small boats, with such secrecy that the enemy knew nothing of the movement until the last one had reached the New York side. This was one of the greatest feats recorded in history, and showed the wonderful skill and daring of the great commander.

It soon became evident that General Howe had laid his plans to take New York, for his ships were surrounding the city, and troops had already begun to land. In this emergency, Washington determined to evacuate the city, knowing well that it was useless to waste the lives of his men by waiting until the bombardment should commence; they were therefore collected on Harlem Heights, and Washington's headquarters were fixed at Morris's house, near Fort Washington.

It was not long before General Howe took possession of the city, encamping himself near the American lines. Some skirmishing took

place on the neighboring plains with varied success, but the strongly fortified works on Harlem Heights, which extended entirely across Manhattan Island to the Hudson River, were not likely to be attacked even by the greater forces of the boasting British; so they remained quietly encamped for nearly three weeks, while the Americans were busily employed in strengthening their works, and building another fort which they named Fort Independence.



CHAPTER X.

Discouraging events in Canada—Benedict Arnold—Unsuccessful attacks on Quebec—Canada abandoned—General Lee sent to manage affairs in the South—Sir Henry Clinton defeated, and obliged to return—Attempts to destroy British shipping—Fresh arrivals of British ships and troops—Washington still hopeful—Advances of the English—Loss of Fort Washington.

WHILE the events of the last six months, related in the two preceding chapters, were taking place in the middle districts, difficulties, discouragements, and actual reverses were occurring in Canada, where the patriot forces were small, and the severe winter had added to the hardships of the situation.

For five months Benedict Arnold, who was now brigadier-general, had blockaded the city of Quebec, in hopes of driving the British within its walls to surrender. Ever since the failure of the previous attack on the city, the Canadians had stood aloof from the cause, and remained sullenly inside without taking any part in the siege. Arnold had been badly wounded in the former attack, and had not yet recovered from

its effects ; but he was a brave man, and thus far his name was among the proudest of his age. Alas, that his after deeds should have so disgraced it !

In April and May re-enforcements arrived under Generals Wooster and Thomas, and grave preparations were made for another attack ; but that also failed, and they were obliged to retreat and hurry away, losing in their hasty flight nearly all their arms, powder, and provisions, the sick being left in the houses of the Canadians by the way.

Much censure was laid on General Schuyler for these disasters, but Washington, who knew well his integrity and pure patriotism, would not listen to a word, either against his fidelity or ability. An investigation was insisted on by the injured man himself, and, after a close examination into all his actions, the committee were well satisfied that he was not to blame for any of the reverses of the campaign.

But the disasters continued, and the unfortunate garrison was moved from place to place, in hopes of better chances for operations against the enemy. The small-pox carried off many of the men, and among them General Thomas, who

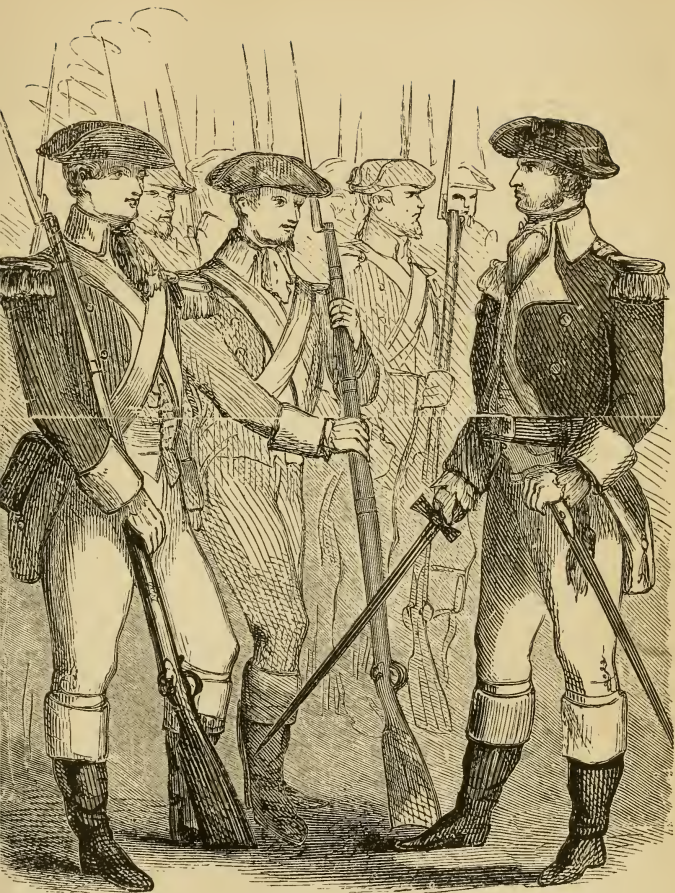
was then in command. It was finally determined to abandon all further attempts to hold Canada, since the strong re-enforcement of the British, under Burgoyne, made it still more impossible to revive the spirits of the discouraged men, and on the 20th of June, 1776, the American forces were withdrawn, and embarked for Crown Point, leaving Canada thenceforward in possession of the British. It was a heavy disappointment to Washington, who had always looked on the occupation of Canada as very important to the American cause, but the necessities of the case admitted of no choice.

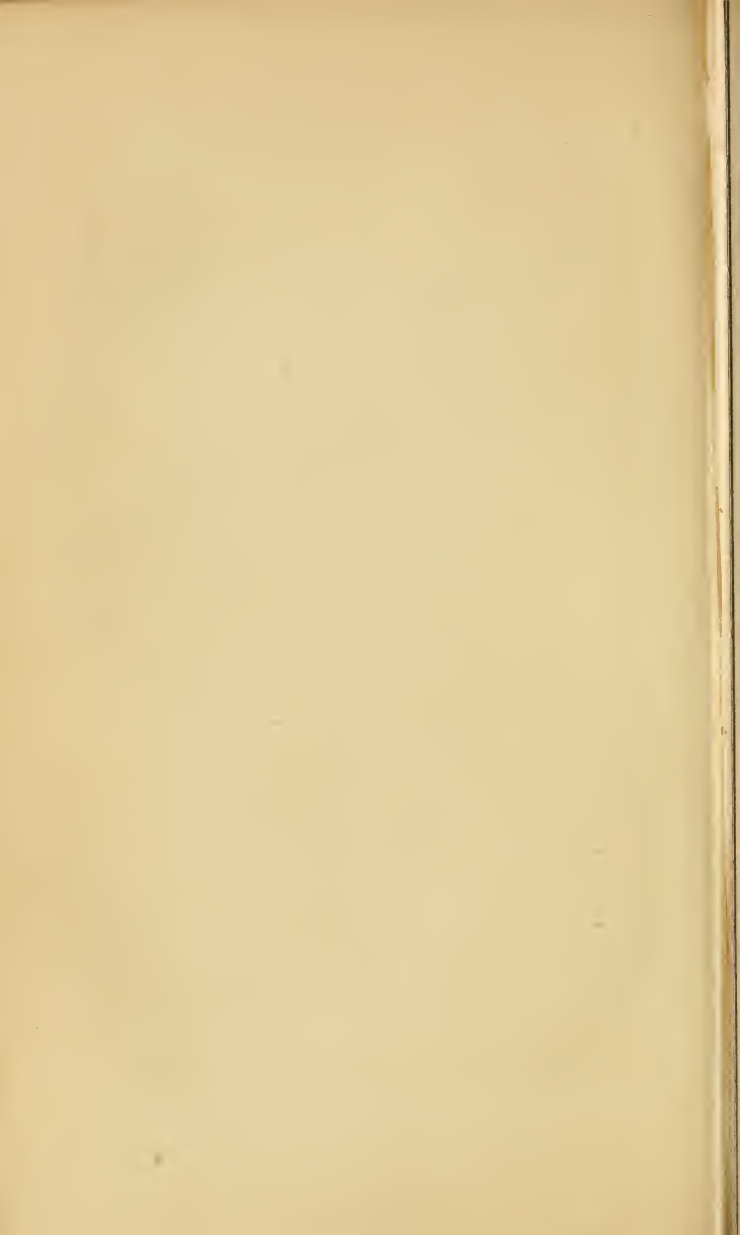
General Gage, who had commanded at the time of the evacuation of Boston, had gone home to England, where his mismanagement of that affair was much censured, and General Howe took his place as supreme commander of the British troops in America. As we have before mentioned, the latter had sent an expedition to the South about that time, intending to make a descent on the Carolinas. Washington, therefore, being constantly on the alert for new difficulties, had sent General Lee down to manage affairs in that quarter. This he did to excellent purpose—following up the enemy's

ships until they finally reached Charleston, where a strong fort had been erected on Sullivan's Island, commanding the harbor. This fort was garrisoned by three hundred and seventy-five soldiers, under Colonel William Moultrie, of South Carolina, who had superintended its construction.

When Sir Henry Clinton arrived with his fleet, instead of running past this, and entering the unprotected city, he stopped to erect batteries on another island near by, and was four weeks preparing to make the attack. On the 28th of June the firing began from the enemy's batteries, while the fleet advanced, and dropped anchor before the fort.

From eleven o'clock until sunset the firing was continued—the British making several unsuccessful attempts to land, but were driven back by the terrible fire from the fort and water batteries. The courage and perseverance shown by the Americans were highly praised by Congress, and the enemy's loss was heavy; one of their finest ships was set on fire and abandoned, and, finally, the remainder of the fleet set sail, and left the scene of their signal defeat, leaving Charleston untouched.





But to return to New York, where the Americans were fortifying the Harlem Heights, keeping a close watch upon the enemy, who were in possession of the city, and encamped on the plains below. A part of the fleet had gone up the Hudson, some of the ships were before the city, and others guarded the East River front and the enemy's quarters on Staten and Long Island.

To destroy the shipping had long been the desire of some active minds, and several plans were proposed for sending fire-ships among the fleet, while an attack at the same moment was to be made on land, but for various reasons the plans did not succeed, and very soon after the fleet was increased by the arrival of one hundred ships, with a large body of fresh troops, including a thousand Hessians, all of whom were landed on Staten Island; and other ships, with more Hessians, were constantly arriving to swell the formidable array of insurgents. At this time, also, the ships of Sir Henry Clinton's squadron had arrived from the late repulse at Charleston, bringing Lord Cornwallis and three thousand men.

No wonder if Washington's heart failed at

the presence of this great army of thirty thousand men, with one hundred and fifty ships, and many guns, while his own amounted in all to only seventeen thousand, many of whom were on the sick list, and were distributed over a wide space. But he did not pause to feel discouraged, but continued his defences, and watched the enemy's movements, although utterly at a loss to account for their long inactivity. At last they moved, and their aim was soon discovered; they wished to get in the rear of the Americans, so as to cut off their communication with the surrounding country, and perhaps bring on a general battle, in which their greater numbers would insure a victory.

The first step taken by General Howe was to send two ships, a frigate and tender, up the Hudson to the Highlands, thus cutting off supplies by water; then, on the 12th of October, troops were embarked on flat-boats and other vessels, and proceeded up the East River to Frog's Point, while five thousand troops were left at the encampment near Harlem, under Lord Percy.

But Washington's quick mind resolved on a measure which should counteract these designs,

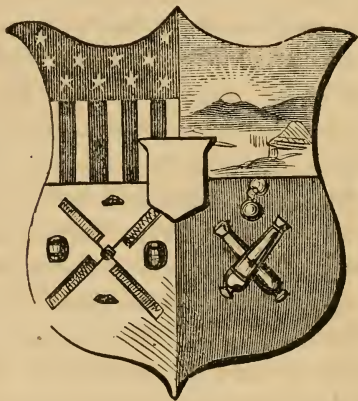
and he retreated in good time to White Plains, where he at once began to fortify himself, with the intention of making a stand there.

This had been done but a few days, when, on the 28th of October, General Howe's army was seen advancing steadily upon the American lines. An attack was made on a part of the works, which resulted in driving the Americans away, and this served to satisfy their ambition for the present, as they did not renew the attack, although they had evidently intended to do so, but for a heavy rain, which gave Washington time to better his position and enlarge his works.

But it was soon seen that General Howe had changed his plans, and was marching his army in the direction of Fort Washington, which was plainly to be the next point of their attack. The far-seeing wisdom of the American commander advised General Greene, who was in charge, to abandon it without waiting for an attack by such superior forces; but Greene thought otherwise, and tried to believe his men safe and the fort impregnable, until after a severe fight he was forced to yield his opinion, and surrender the works with all his troops to the enemy.

This was not done, however, until they had

sustained the enemy's fire for four or five hours, and found that further resistance would be useless, when Colonel Magan, who was in command of the fort, surrendered himself and twenty-eight hundred men to the merciless enemy.



CHAPTER XI.

Opposing views of the generals—Washington not discouraged—Retreat into Jersey—March toward the Delaware River—Cornwallis in pursuit—Miserable condition of our army—Strange delay of General Lee—Washington crosses the Delaware before the enemy reach it—They are unable to follow—General Lee taken prisoner—Gloom and despondency throughout the country—Washington plans an attack on Trenton—Recrosses the Delaware—Surprise of the Hessians—Victory for the Americans—Partial failure of a part of the plan—Cadwalader crosses at Burlington—Pursuit of the Hessians.

THE loss of Fort Washington, with so many troops, and a considerable amount of artillery and other arms, was very heavy, and the Commander-in-chief must have been full of gloomy forebodings as to the future.

His opinion was often opposed by other generals, who had plans of their own, and this was shown whenever a council of war was held to consult about any fresh movement.

In this way the unhappy affair of Fort Washington took place, and it is said that he wept like a child to see his men cut down without

mercy by the Hessian bayonets while they were begging for quarter.

Washington's letters to his brother at this time show how many and great were his fears and discouragements. Most of his men had been enlisted for short terms of service, and these were about to expire, but he could not induce them to re-enlist; besides the active duties of the campaign, therefore, he was obliged to be constantly recruiting; and this, in the face of such discouraging prospects, was hard work indeed.

Yet the great mind of Washington was still unwavering in its fidelity to the cause, and, placing his dependence, not in man, but in the God in whom he believed and trusted, he strained every nerve and pushed onward.

Of course, now that Fort Washington was gone, Fort Lee, on the opposite side of the river, was useless for all purposes of defence, and he now ordered the removal of all the stores and ammunition, with a view to a retreat into Jersey. This was begun, and nearly accomplished on the night of the 19th of November, but on the following morning, before they were entirely removed, the enemy began to

cross the river in two hundred boats, and by ten o'clock, six thousand men, with their artillery, were landed within a few miles of the fort, under those lofty perpendicular rocks known as the Palisades.

In their present condition, with most of their arms and ammunition gone, retreat was the only thing to be thought of, and no time was to be lost, for, if possible, they must reach the Hackensack River in time to cross it before the enemy should get there. So, leaving their tents, wagons, and baggage behind, they hurried on, and arrived at the bridge just as the advance of the enemy came up. In their eagerness to escape capture, some swam over, and others crowded across the bridge. But it was, of course, idle to think of tarrying here until Cornwallis's forces should assemble, as they were in a flat country, where intrenchments would be needed, and yet were without the tools for making them; besides this, they were in a position where the British ships could land troops at any moment within a few miles of them. General Washington therefore continued his retreat toward the Delaware River, writing letters as he went along to Congress and the Governor

of Jersey, begging most earnestly for more men to be sent to join him without delay.

At this time the army under his immediate command amounted to little more than three thousand men, and they were closely pursued by Lord Cornwallis, with at least six thousand. But all his appeals for more men seemed to be in vain ; his cause was not very popular, and the Jersey farmers, seeing his mere handful of soldiers, without blankets or shelter, and many of them barefooted also, in that wintry December weather, marching along before a pursuing enemy, thought the cause was altogether hopeless, and could not be persuaded to leave their comfortable homes to enlist in such a doubtful enterprise. Besides all this, their own homes were in danger from the hordes of British and Hessian soldiers, and their families needed protection.

While Washington was leading his little army toward the Delaware, General Lee was tarrying in the neighborhood of the Hudson River, hoping to effect something in that quarter which might redound to his own credit, although his commander had repeatedly urged him to hasten on with re-enforcements. Perhaps General

Lee was growing jealous of his superior, and longed to accomplish something for himself which would raise him above Washington, in the good opinion of the country. It was another discouraging event in Washington's difficult course, and he learned accidentally, from an intercepted letter, what were Lee's real feelings toward himself.

But, pressing forward, he reached Trenton on the 2d of December. On the 4th General Lee crossed the Hudson, and began to move slowly after Washington—being no longer able to withstand his direct and urgent orders.

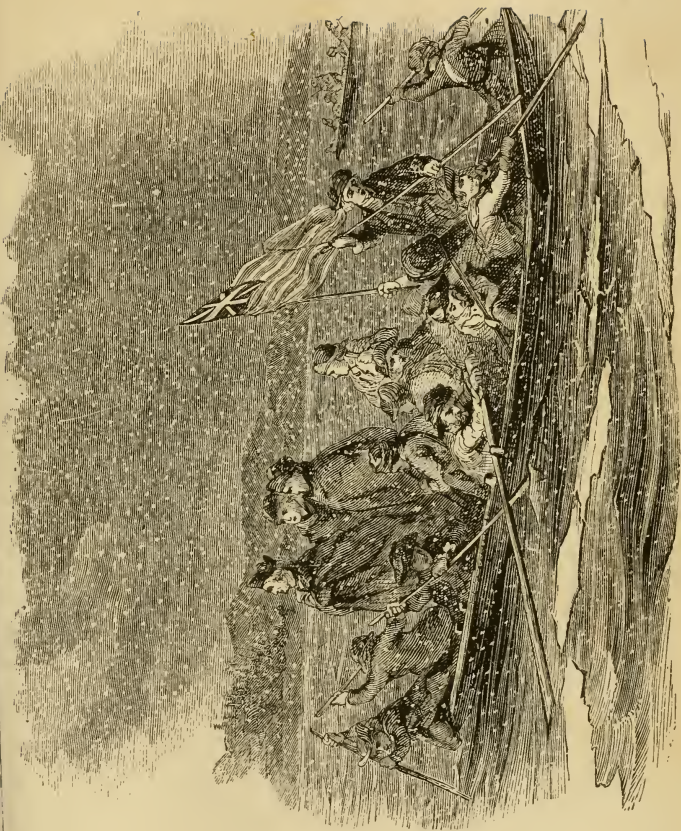
This retreat of the Americans across the Jerseys (as they were always called at that time), was a work of necessity; upon receiving a moderate re-enforcement, therefore, from Pennsylvania, Washington turned back to Princeton, intending to join Lord Stirling and General Greene, who were there with three thousand men; and here they would make a stand, if necessary.

But hardly had he reached there when the enemy was found to be approaching Princeton in tremendous force, and well knowing that they would soon be surrounded and over-

powered, Washington hastened back to Trenton, with the whole of the American troops, and, collecting every boat that could be had on such short notice, they crossed the Delaware in safety, and reached the opposite shore just as Lord Cornwallis, with his great army, arrived at the river's bank. Of course, the boats were all on the other side of the stream, and so could not avail the British much, and the floating ice made the crossing extremely difficult and dangerous, even with boats; their passage was, therefore, effectually stopped until the ice should become strong enough to admit of their marching over.

His troops, principally Hessians, in the mean time, were stationed at various points along the river, viz., at Trenton, Pennington, Bordentown, and Burlington, while a large force was kept encamped at Brunswick.

Washington's greatest anxiety now was to hasten Lee's movements, who was marching very slowly along, having been three weeks travelling as far as Morristown. He was still hoping to make some bold stroke in that quarter as soon as New York was entirely free from British troops, and, although bound to





obey the orders of his Commander-in-chief, he was desirous of winning glory for himself, be the consequences what they might to Washington.

Whatever were his intentions, however, they were unexpectedly interrupted; for one night, while stopping at a private house near Baskingridge, a Tory in the neighborhood betrayed him to the enemy, and early in the morning, before he had finished his breakfast, he was taken prisoner by a company of British dragoons and carried away in triumph to their camp. This was a severe blow to the American cause, and gave great occasion for rejoicing among the Britishers, for they considered Lee as at that time the greatest American general.

Immediately after his capture, General Sullivan, who succeeded to the command, marched his men rapidly toward the Delaware, and reached Washington's camp on the 20th of December. They were barefooted, half clothed, worn out, and discouraged when they arrived, seeming to care for nothing so much as to get home, and many of them whose terms were soon to expire did leave very soon.

About this time a proclamation was made by

Lord Howe and his brother, General Howe, offering pardon to all "rebels" who would lay down their arms and return to their allegiance. In this hour of discouragement many of those who had till now stood by the cause accepted the offer and went over to the enemy, while others took the oath and went quietly home, refusing to fight on either side. All over the country was a feeling of gloom and despondency.

"These were the times that tried men's souls," says one who wrote of those days, and Washington had surely enough to crush him; yet he faltered not, but while for three weeks the enemy remained upon the east side of the Delaware, scattered over a broad space and taking their ease, he was meditating a movement by which he hoped to retrieve in part the misfortunes of the year.

His plan was to cross the river in three detachments at as many different points, and surprise the Hessians in their quarters. It was a bold movement, and if it failed all might be lost; but the emergency was great.

The 25th of December was fixed on for the execution of the plan: Washington and twenty-five hundred men were to cross at McKonkey's ferry

(now called Taylorsville); General Ewing with another body at a point just below Trenton; and General Putnam, with the troops from Philadelphia, near Burlington: thus all would be ready to strike at once on the morning of the 26th. Christmas night was chosen because, being a holiday, they hoped to find the enemy off their guard.

The eventful night came, and Washington with his men began to cross the river amid the greatest difficulties, the weather being intensely cold, the wind high, and a blinding snow-storm filling the air, while the strong current and the moving masses of ice made the passage perilous in the extreme. Two of the men were frozen to death before morning, and all were benumbed with the bitter cold; yet, standing in the front of the boat, with his cloak wrapped around him, and his eye intently fixed on the opposite shore, Washington cheered on his men until they landed with the artillery and muskets, the latter being much damaged by the storm.

They had now nine miles to march before they could reach the enemy at Trenton; but they pushed on, and by eight o'clock arrived at the entrance of the town. A man whom they

met gladly directed them to the Hessian quarters, wishing them success in their mission.

The troops had been divided so as to enter the town at the same time by three different roads, while the other forces under General Ewing were to occupy the bridge across the Assunpink, at the lower end of the town, and intercept them there. Such was Washington's plan, and he led his men forward in the midst of the pelting storm until they surrounded the enemy's camp. A scene of great confusion ensued, and a short fight, when the Hessians were put to flight, leaving their artillery behind them. Some of them ran southwardly and escaped over the bridge, and others started toward Princeton, but were soon stopped by a body of Americans whom Washington had sent to meet them. But their resistance was short, and their commander, Colonel Rahl, soon fell from his horse mortally wounded, while endeavoring to restore order among his men; they therefore surrendered themselves, with their valuable arms.

The wounded Colonel Rahl received every attention from the American commander, who had him conveyed to his own quarters, where

he was cared for until he died, a few days afterward.

Nearly a thousand prisoners were taken in this affair, while the additions to their stock of arms and ammunition found in the Hessian quarters was a great gain. Had the other branches of the enterprise succeeded as well, the Jerseys would have been well-nigh rid of the invaders, who were now in possession of the greater part of the State. But General Ewing had been unable to effect a crossing on account of the condition of the river, and the impossibility to draw the heavy cannon up the slippery bank, and thus for want of their help at the bridge a large number of the retreating Hessians escaped to Bordentown.

At Burlington, too, the crossing failed, and thus the full triumph of the scheme was wanting. Had all gone well, Washington would have remained at Trenton, but his force was too small to attempt holding the town, in case the enemy, now roused to activity, should return and concentrate for an attack. He had only twenty-four hundred raw troops, while the enemy had some ten thousand disciplined ones, with horsemen and wagons, so he determined

to recross the Delaware with his prisoners and captured artillery. This was accomplished with difficulty, and the prisoners marched to Newtown, about ten miles back from the river, where they were quartered in the church and jail until they could be moved further.

The people, who had so often heard of the terrible Hessians that had come over to fight for the English, flocked to see them, supposing, perhaps, that they looked different from other people; and this was done wherever they were taken, until they finally reached Winchester, in Virginia, where they were to remain. These were the same Hessians that had taken part in the battles at White Plains and Fort Washington, and they were, of course, sorely mortified to find the tables turned on them so soon; but such are the fortunes of war.

General Putnam, who was in command at Bristol, opposite Burlington, had been summoned to Philadelphia by news of a threatened insurrection, leaving General Cadwalader to lead the troops across the Delaware on the night of the 25th. This he was unable to do, as we have said; but on the following morning he heard the cannonading at Trenton, and the

sound aroused him to fresh efforts. Before noon came the reports of Washington's success, and he now determined to make another attempt, in order to strike, if possible, the camp of Count Donop, who commanded the Hessian forces at Burlington.

Cadwalader had laid all his plans with judgment, and by way of diverting the enemy while the crossing was accomplished, Colonel Griffin had undertaken to draw him off in the direction of Mount Holly, where he was to keep him engaged in skirmishing until the forces from the other side could be landed. But that was to be done on the 25th; and, as it was now afternoon of the next day, the fear was that the Count had by this time returned with his army, and would be in readiness to receive them as they crossed. Still, Cadwalader determined to make the desperate attempt, supposing Washington to be still at Trenton, where he could join him by the Jersey side.

The river being much wider here than above, and in no better condition as regarded the ice, he had the greatest difficulty in effecting a passage, although he did finally succeed; but it was noon of the 27th when the last boat reached

the Jersey shore, bringing also the news that Washington had returned to Pennsylvania. This seemed most unfortunate, but they must make the best of it; and, consulting with Colonel Reed, they resolved to look around them before adopting any further plan of proceeding.

The enemy was nowhere in sight; and they soon learned from the country-people that Count Donop, having heard of the disaster at Trenton, and believing that they were to be pursued by a powerful body of Americans, had collected his men in great haste, and left in a terrible panic during the night before. Of course, Cadwalader lost no time in sending the news to General Washington, urging him to recross at Trenton, whither all his own men should be marched at once to join their Commander-in-chief.

Had they possessed the means of despatching information quickly, such as we have in these times, these painful crossings and marches might many of them have been saved. In estimating, therefore, the great deeds of that little army and its wise commanders, we must remember all these disadvantages, and then we can better judge of their wonderful courage and perseverance. On many of those weary marches

over the frozen ground, the barefooted men left bloody tracks in the snow for miles ; and yet all that was borne for the purchase of our freedom. Can we ever prize too highly the glorious inheritance that cost our fathers so much !



CHAPTER XII.

Washington joins in the pursuit—Short enlistments—Difficulty in getting money—Important captures—Effect of Washington's movements on Lord Cornwallis—The former retreats again to Trenton—Meets the enemy at the bridge—Cornwallis waits for the morrow—Washington's strategy—Cornwallis's pursuit—Battle at Stony Brook—Washington encamps for the winter at Morristown.

ON the 28th of December Colonel Reed reached Trenton, and had as yet found no traces of the Hessians; they had evidently continued their flight toward Amboy. Cadwalader was coming on with eighteen hundred men, and five hundred more were coming from Philadelphia to join him.

General Washington, who had received Cadwalader's letters and approved of his advice, immediately prepared to cross the river, and on the 29th and two following days the whole force was with much difficulty landed once more and marched into Trenton.

Pursuit was now the order of the day, and although in their present condition, with the weather very severe, a long march was not a pleasant prospect; yet the men were so much encouraged by their late success, and so glad to have the opportunity of following the enemy, that they started gladly on the track, and the advance soon began to capture a few straggling remnants of the retreating Hessians.

But one of the greatest drawbacks to the further success of the cause was the system of enlisting men for very short terms of service, and now, as it had often happened before, just as they were ready to start in pursuit the present term of many of the men was about to expire. Washington therefore was forced to plead with them to continue for six weeks longer, promising on his own responsibility to pay to each man a bounty of ten dollars in coin. Of course the money was to be paid at once, and he wrote to Robert Morris at Philadelphia, begging him to send at least one hundred pounds for this purpose. But gold was very scarce, and Congress was sitting at Baltimore, whither it had adjourned for safety soon after Washington's first crossing of the Delaware;

besides, the public treasury had long been empty. A wealthy citizen, however, loaned the money, and it was forwarded to Trenton on the 30th, thus enabling the Commander to make good his promises and secure a large part of his men for a little longer period.

A day or two were required for rest and preparation, which brought them to the 1st of January, 1777. But these days did not pass idly, for a small detachment of horsemen belonging to the Philadelphia troops, under Colonel Reed, were engaged in scouring the country around, and had succeeded in capturing, at a private house near Princeton, twelve British dragoons, with whom they returned in triumph to Washington's headquarters. From them they obtained important information, which for the present materially altered their plans.

General Howe had been for some time in snug winter-quarters in New York, and Lord Cornwallis, thinking he had put the Yankees down pretty effectually, was just starting on a trip to England when the news of Washington's attack on Trenton reached them. They had been quietly waiting all this time for the Delaware to freeze over, so that they could cross

and renew their triumphal march toward Philadelphia. It must have surprised them very much to find that the river had not been such a barrier to the American movements.

But now that they heard the mortifying news, General Howe sent for Lord Cornwallis, and ordered him to proceed at once into Jersey and drive out the impudent Yankees who had so frightened his Hessian friends. The twelve dragoons taken by Colonel Reed and his men were the advance-guard of the great army that was then on its way to Trenton, and the main body was within a few miles. Besides these, General Howe himself was said to be on the road from Amboy with a thousand cavalry. All this information was obtained from the prisoners, and, of course, changed the plans for a march into the more prudent determination to stay and defend themselves here.

Choosing the stone bridge over the Assunpink, the same one that the Hessians had crossed in their flight some ten days before, Washington stationed his artillery so as to guard it, the main body of his troops occupying the high ground near by.

It was about sunset on the 2d of January,

when Cornwallis, at the head of his army, actually entered the town and attempted to force his way across the bridge ; but the American cannons were used so advantageously that they were repulsed several times, a loud cheer rising from the patriot lines as the enemy were obliged to withdraw. But, although unable to cross that night, the British lit their camp-fires beside the stream, in the confident assurance that in the morning they would drive their despised foe from the face of the country.

A terrible battle was expected the next day, and Washington's heart must have sunk within him as he thought of the difference in the numbers of the two armies ; utter ruin seemed at hand. As he walked about the camp and realized the desperate position of affairs, he strove to think of some expedient, for, of the many dark periods through which they had thus far passed, this one seemed the darkest and most disheartening. There they were, the two camps in sight of each other's fires, with only the narrow stream between them, awaiting daylight to engage in a bloody battle ; no chance of escape by the half-frozen river, and perhaps still less by the roads leading out of the town, which

were doubtless infested by the enemy's reinforcements.

But there was not a moment to spare ; he therefore called a council of war, and proposed a secret march toward Princeton, rather than stay to encounter certain destruction in the morning. This plan met with the approval of General Mercer and the others, and with all haste, in the stillness of the night, the preparations were made and the troops started on the march along the bank of the creek to Princeton. Meanwhile the camp-fires were kept burning all night, the guard remained on duty at the bridge, and men were kept digging intrenchments in a noisy way, so as to prevent all suspicion of the real movements of the Americans. The chief part of their baggage was sent off to Burlington to avoid hindrance on their march, and at daybreak the remaining troops were to hurry on to join the main body.

When they reached Stony Brook, on the outskirts of Princeton, the sun was just rising, and they soon found that three regiments of British troops were stationed there ready to display their valor : one of them was just starting for Trenton, where it was ordered to re-enforce

Lord Cornwallis. Washington had led his men into a wood by the roadside, where they were first seen by these advancing troops commanded by Colonel Mawhood.

A severe conflict ensued, in which the British at first seemed to be triumphant, and the gallant General Mercer fell, mortally wounded; but soon the Americans gained ground, cheered on by the voice of the Commander-in-chief, who rode fearlessly up and down directing all their movements. The British were fairly beaten, and Mawhood with his men began their retreat toward Trenton, where he hoped to join Cornwallis. In this short battle the enemy's loss was one hundred killed and three hundred prisoners, while the Americans lost twenty-five or thirty men and a few officers. Among the latter, however, were the brave General Mercer and Colonel Haslet, both greatly lamented.

Washington now followed on after that part of the retreating foe which had gone toward New Brunswick, hoping to overtake them and capture their stores; but his men were too much exhausted to proceed so far, and he therefore changed his course toward Morristown, resting for awhile at Pluckamin on the road. Here



his worn-out army was allowed a night's repose after its arduous labors and long marches.

This was a providential move for the Americans, for Lord Cornwallis, on discovering how Washington had outgeneralled him, had started early in the morning for Brunswick, supposing they were close upon the heels of the Yankees, until they reached the place and found themselves again deceived. The great English soldier must have begun by this time to realize the spirit of the American army, even if he did not quite relish their actions.

As soon as the men were rested they renewed the march to Morristown, where they went into winter-quarters, not remaining quiet, however, but engaged in constant expeditions to harass and dislodge the enemy, which succeeded so well that before long they had driven from the Jerseys every trace of Hessian and British invaders, excepting at Brunswick and Amboy, where they were able to obtain their supplies from New York.

Thus the campaign which opened so disastrously and was pursued under such immense difficulties was concluded gloriously, and its results inspired the little army with fresh cour-

age and confidence in its Commander. Congress granted him unlimited power in the direction of military affairs, being more than ever convinced of his worth and ability.



CHAPTER XIII.

British promises broken—Washington's proclamation—Small-pox in camp—A hard winter—Exchange of prisoners—British cruelty to our men—General Howe makes an expedition up Long Island Sound—Successful counter-movement—Arrival of Kosciusko—British driven out of Jersey—Another secret expedition—Philadelphia its supposed destination—Washington marches to Germantown—Arrival of Lafayette—British expedition lands at Elkton—Washington hastens to meet them—Battle of Brandywine—Return to Germantown—British entrance into Philadelphia—Contrast between the two armies.

As we have said, Lord Howe's proclamation, promising pardon and protection to all who laid down their arms, had kept many of the Jersey-men at home who were before on the American side. But they had found to their cost how little those promises were worth, for the British and Hessians, in their repeated passages across the State, had plundered and outraged them without scruple. They were therefore indignant at such treatment, and, full of the spirit of revenge, resolved once more to take a part

in the defence of their soil against these false invaders. Companies of militia were formed to act as scouting-parties to prevent the ravages of the enemy, and their exploits under General Philemon Dickinson earned them a good reputation for bravery.

On the 25th of January Washington issued a proclamation inviting all persons to take the oath of allegiance to the United States within thirty days, or else to remove within the British lines, and all those who refused to comply would, after that time, be treated as open enemies. The measure met with much opposition from many quarters; yet the American Commander was determined to adhere to it, as it was high time that they were rid of the Tories, who, while living in their midst, were acting altogether in the interests of the enemy.

While they were in the camp at Morristown, the small-pox broke out, and raged fearfully among the troops, many of them dying of it. Inoculation was therefore resorted to in order to prevent its further spread, for our present mode of vaccination was not known. That was a much more severe method, and required careful nursing to insure safety. Washington showed

the greatest care and attention to his suffering men, visiting the loathsome hospitals himself to see that every possible comfort was provided for them. Fortunately, during that trying period, they were permitted to remain quiet in winter-quarters, without any movement of the enemy to disturb them.

The exchange of prisoners had been a subject of discussion for some time past between the commanders of the two armies, and the miserable condition in which the Americans were returned to headquarters was a disgrace to the British name. Lord Howe did not attempt to deny that the exchange of man for man under these circumstances was unequal, for the poor emaciated beings who were from time to time released from his prisons, looked sadly by the side of the healthy Hessians and Britons in General Washington's guard-houses. The American captives were placed either in prison-ships, or in the vilest and filthiest dungeons, where disease was sure to set in, and render their sufferings horrible.

Among the brave men who were languishing in the enemy's hands were the unfortunate Gen. Lee, and Ethan Allen, of Ticonderoga fame, and

many efforts had been made to effect their release, but thus far in vain.

It was past the middle of March when the British showed symptoms of moving again, for they had been waiting for supplies of artillery and troops from England, which, however, were slow in coming. In the mean time, Washington had been urging upon Congress the necessity of a larger army, and had partially succeeded in his efforts, but there was so much persuasion necessary, and the supplies came so slowly, that the prospects for another campaign were not very encouraging to the Commander-in-chief.

The first movement of General Howe was an expedition up Long Island Sound to Connecticut, where they destroyed the American stores at Danbury, but were driven back to their boats, and thus forced to return. In the retreat Gen. Wooster and General Arnold were both wounded, the former mortally. Another party was sent out just before this to destroy other stores at Peekskill, but succeeded rather poorly, although these two attempts to cripple the Americans served to arouse a more lively military spirit both in New York and Connecticut. A counter-movement was set on foot by Colonel Meigs,

who attacked the British storehouses at Sag Harbor, Long Island, and destroyed every thing belonging to them on shore, besides burning about a dozen vessels and carrying away *ninety* prisoners. This was a great feat, considering that he had but one hundred and seventy men, with a few whale-boats. They first rowed across the Sound, and then carried their boats overland to the bay, where they were again launched, returning in the same way after the fight, the whole being accomplished in twenty-five hours.

Among a number of foreigners who about this time came to take part in the cause of American Independence was Thaddeus Kosciusko, a Pole, who was appointed aid-de-camp to General Washington, and afterward became conspicuous as an officer of the Revolution. The arrival of twenty-four thousand muskets from France was also a great help.

On the 13th of June the British army moved from New Brunswick and prepared for battle, spreading along the Raritan River for several miles, and fortifying itself as if to invite the Americans to make an attack. But General Washington was too wise to wish a battle at

this time with his new troops, so after various changes of position and several sharp skirmishes, by which he managed to harass the British, they at length left Jersey altogether and went to Staten Island again.

News now came that the enemy were fitting out another expedition, and the fleet were evidently preparing for a blow in some distant quarter, although it was impossible even to guess where the point of attack would be. Another piece of news was, that General Burgoyne with a formidable force was marching on Ticonderoga, and at first they could not help thinking that this fleet was intended to join him by way of the Hudson River and Lake Champlain. That would be an unfortunate move for the Americans, as Washington well knew, and yet an attack on Philadelphia by the Delaware bay and river was quite as much to be dreaded; so they waited in great anxiety until the fleet really put to sea, which convinced General Washington that it was bound to the latter named place.

Acting on this belief, his men were marched with all speed across Jersey, until they took up their quarters at Germantown, six miles

beyond Philadelphia, while the Commander-in-chief waited, and watched for the approach of the fleet. For three days he remained in this suspense, but was not idle, being in constant consultation with Congress, now sitting again in its old place.

It was while waiting here at this time that he first met with the Marquis de Lafayette, a young Frenchman who had become so much interested in American affairs, that he had left all his home comforts to come and fight for the cause of liberty. He was not quite twenty years of age, and asked of Congress the privilege of serving in the army, at his own expense, as a volunteer. Washington at once perceived his value and sincerity, and had him rewarded with an appointment as Major-General. His after services won for him the honor and gratitude of all Americans.

After a few days of harassing uncertainty, the fleet was discovered ascending Chesapeake Bay, and the troops were finally landed just below the head of the Elk River, where Elkton now stands. Washington knew that their real intention was to attack Philadelphia, and hastening to meet them before they could reach the city,

he marched his army through the streets, and thence to the banks of the Brandywine, near Wilmington, Delaware, where they encamped. They must have looked differently from our modern soldiers, as they went along clothed in all sorts of dresses,—many of them in brown shirts and tattered pantaloons, with sprigs of green in their hats ; but their numbers surprised the Tory inhabitants of the city, who had never before supposed there was much strength in the patriot cause.

Near the place of their encampment, on the 11th of September, was fought the bloody battle of the Brandywine, in which the British under Cornwallis were victorious, and the Americans were forced to retreat during the night to Chester, having lost nine hundred in killed and wounded, and four hundred prisoners. The British loss was nearly six hundred in killed and wounded.

On the following day Washington continued the retreat until they reached Germantown again, and encamped there for a day and night, in order to rest his wearied army. Having done this, he again started on a march up the Lancaster road, determined to risk a battle if they should meet with the enemy. When they had

gone some twenty miles, the two armies met; but a heavy rain coming on, prevented any action by ruining the ammunition. The Americans had no bayonets, while the British were provided with them, and skilled in their use; at present, therefore, a safe retreat was the only alternative to be thought of.

These movements of the Americans were intended for the defence of Philadelphia, and Washington still hoped to prevent the enemy from reaching it. With a view to this, various detachments were sent in different quarters to head them off, and although the American army was in a desperate condition for want of shoes, one thousand of the men being actually barefooted, still the marches were made, and the enemy's designs frustrated for a few days. But on the night of the 22d, General Howe crossed the Schuylkill, and pushed forward to Philadelphia, having thrown Washington off his track by a pretended movement toward Reading. Thus, on the 26th of September, Lord Cornwallis and his grand army, in their scarlet uniforms, with fine horses, artillery, and music, entered the city, and marched in triumph along the same streets where had so lately

been seen the shabby-looking troops of the patriots.

As most of the inhabitants, like those of New York, were Tories, it is easy to judge of the effect produced on them as they compared the looks of the two companies, while the greatest rejoicings took place in the British camps over the capture of this, the capital of the United States, from which the Congress had only just escaped to Lancaster. One would think that now Washington's courage and confidence would have failed; but not so. He only had to look around him to the other departments of his charge, and try to find encouragement in the more prosperous state of affairs in the North, where Burgoyne had been trying in vain to gain a permanent advantage.



CHAPTER XIV.

Transactions in the Northern Department—British plans for ending the rebellion—Burgoyne—St. Leger—General Schuyler—St. Clair—Scarcity of troops—Capture of General Prescott—British plans work well—Schuyler not discouraged—Battle of Bennington—Arnold's strategy—St. Leger's troops driven back—General Gates supersedes General Schuyler—Jealous conduct of the former—Burgoyne's position uncomfortable—British fleet ascends the Hudson—Defeat of Burgoyne—Sir Henry Clinton returns to New York.

IN order to understand what has been done during all this time in the Northern Department, we must go back a little.

As we have said, General Washington had received news of Burgoyne's advance upon Ticonderoga, and had given directions to General Schuyler, who had charge of that department.

The British plans for ending the rebellion were quite extensive at this time, and were to be carried out with vigor. First, General Burgoyne with his main force was to start from St. Johns, on the Sorel River, and proceed to Lake

Champlain, then down the Hudson River to Albany. Secondly, Colonel St. Leger was to land at Oswego, on Lake Ontario, and come down through the Mohawk Valley, ravaging it in all directions, until he joined Burgoyne at Albany. Here it was expected they would meet General Howe or Sir Henry Clinton, who in the mean time would have accomplished great things in the region around New York, and together they hoped soon to finish up the grand undertaking by compelling General Washington to surrender.

On the 16th of June Burgoyne left St. Johns with all his troops and baggage, and proceeded up the lake until he reached a place near Crown Point, where, on the 21st, he encamped. While he was coming along in fine spirits, General St. Clair, by General Schuyler's orders, had prepared to receive him at Ticonderoga, and scouts were constantly bringing him in the news of the enemy's gradual approach. Indian canoes were seen, and the smoke of the camp-fires could be plainly discerned from that lofty fortress, which overlooked the beautiful waters of the lake. The most constant vigilance was demanded ; and General St. Clair, who was in

charge of Ticonderoga, wrote in much alarm to General Schuyler, begging for more men, as he was satisfied an immediate attack was intended.

At the same time came news of Colonel St. Leger's descent upon the Mohawk Valley, with entreaties from Fort Stanwix for more men. General Schuyler endeavored to cheer up the spirits of the little garrison, in such imminent danger from overpowering forces, and as soon as possible sent re-enforcements.

On the 1st of July, Burgoyne began to draw very near to Ticonderoga. General St. Clair was a brave Scotchman, who had been in the French and Indian wars, and he still hoped to make a good defence in case the attack should begin before General Schuyler with his re-enforcements arrived.

In the mean time, the latter general had waited in vain for the expected troops from Peekskill, and on the 7th he started with such of the militia forces as he could muster, altogether about fifteen hundred men, to go to Ticonderoga. When on his way up the Hudson, at Stillwater, he heard with great astonishment that General St. Clair had evacuated the fort.

This news was at once sent to General Wash-

ington, who was as much surprised as General Schuyler had been, and, in answer to the earnest entreaties of the latter, as many troops as could be spared were hurried forward to enable him to meet the threatening dangers. On the 10th, General Schuyler, at Fort Edward, received the first tidings of St. Clair and his men; they were in the forest fifty miles off, and had been forced to evacuate the fort, the British having surrounded it, and having them completely at their mercy. A hasty retreat in the night alone saved them from becoming prisoners.

It was just at this time, when things looked so dark, that a party of Americans under Colonel Barton captured the British General Prescott, a man who had made himself very odious by his unkind treatment of our prisoners. This was a cheering piece of news, and Washington now hoped to be able to exchange him for General Lee, who was still in the enemy's hands; but as General Howe was at sea, no answer to his proposals could be obtained at present.

General Schuyler lost no time in throwing up such intrenchments as he was able to do, aided by Kosciusko, Arnold, and St. Clair, near Fort Edward: he was determined, if possible, to

prevent Burgoyne from proceeding any further down into the heart of the country. But as the latter advanced with his forces, he wisely retreated down the Hudson, to about thirty miles above Albany. Here he received discouraging accounts from Fort Stanwix, which was then being threatened by Colonel St. Leger,—one of the most valuable American officers, General Herkimer, having been killed in a battle with the Indians that were assisting the British.

All this was enough to distract any man ; but General Schuyler was too brave, and quite too much interested in the great cause of liberty to pause in his work ; so he went on with energy to collect more troops, and, as best he could, to guard against Burgoyne on the north and St. Leger on the west, both of them apparently ready to close in around him.

So far, the British plans had worked well, but now the Indian allies who had added so much to the power of Burgoyne's army began to quarrel, and finally left him, and returned to their homes in Canada, carrying with them whatever they pleased of spoils and baggage. Of course, this was an unexpected trouble for Burgoyne,

and he could not stir, nor proceed further in his designs upon the American General, until he repaired his losses by stealing from the stores of his enemy. But in the attempt to do this, he was unsuccessful, although his best Hessian soldiers were sent out to attack and plunder the American camps and villages throughout New England, while he awaited the result in his quarters at Fort Edward.

In one of these plundering attacks, at Bennington, Vermont, a severe battle occurred, in which the Americans were victorious, and captured almost the entire British army, with arms, wagons, and ammunition. It was a great gain to the patriots, but a bitter reverse to Burgoyne.

This was the news which cheered Washington just as he was moving his men from Philadelphia to the Brandywine, and relieved his mind from much anxiety regarding the northern department.

On the other hand, St. Leger, who was drawing his parallels nearer and nearer to Fort Stanwix, felt sure of capturing it in a short time, and would probably have done so, but for a stratagem of General Anderson, who was then on his way with a small re-enforcement for the fort. A

half-witted Tory, who had been captured and condemned as a spy, was sent into the British camp with orders to frighten the Indians by representing that a large force was coming, his own life being spared on condition of his doing so. This had the desired effect; and the Indians, who really feared the Yankees, became so fierce and unmanageable from their desire to escape, that St. Leger, much against his will, retreated in haste, leaving all his stores to fall into the hands of the Americans. When they were far away toward Canada, he discovered how he had been deceived; but it was too late to return.

These two blows had crippled the British, and broken up all their present hopes of conquest.

Just at this time, General Schuyler was superseded by General Gates, who had long been jealous of him, and had managed to make such representations to Congress as led them to distrust the brave general who had toiled so hard for the good of his country. His noble spirit was shown by his generous conduct toward Gates, and by his consenting to remain and serve under his new director; for he well knew that to leave the post entirely at that time might seri-

ously affect the cause, which was of more importance, in his estimation, than any mere form of etiquette. But it was all lost upon Gates, who was too conceited and vain to care for Schuyler's offered advice, and was willing to slight him whenever he could do so.

After a little while, this jealous and uncomfortable spirit showed itself to General Arnold, who had done such excellent service in many a battle, but was now dismissed and insulted, because he was receiving the credit for his efforts. Still, Arnold remained in the camp, resolved to do what he could in case a battle should occur.

Burgoyne's position was now growing unsafe; for while his forces were so much weakened by the loss of his Indian allies, and many valuable stores, the Americans were strengthening their posts below him, and, by an unexpected blow behind him, were besieging Ticonderoga, thus threatening to close the door of escape into Canada. He was, however, waiting anxiously for Sir Henry Clinton's expedition up the Hudson, which he still hoped to join, and this had been delayed so long that he was almost in despair.

But at length Sir Henry's fleet sailed up the Hudson, stormed the forts on its banks, and landed his army on the west side of the river. They then marched up, burning towns, villages, and private residences on the way, until nothing remained between them and Burgoyne but Gates and his army.

The 7th of October had now come, and Burgoyne resolved to force his way through the American lines if possible, and reach Albany, where he hoped to find Sir Henry ready to join him. A bloody battle followed, in which he was utterly defeated, and obliged to retreat; and so vigorously did the Americans pursue and harass him, that on the 17th of October he finally surrendered his army of near six thousand men, seven thousand stands of arms, and military stores of the most valuable kinds.

Just as the terms were arranged, Burgoyne received the tidings of Clinton's successful career up the river, but it was too late to change the order of things. After his surrender he was received in the kindest manner by the American officers, and as one of the terms of the treaty was, that the British officers should all be per-

mitted to return to England, they soon set sail, never again to visit America.

Of course Sir Henry Clinton, being thus disappointed in the final object of his expedition, could only return with his fleet, leaving the river once more clear of British ships and soldiers.



CHAPTER XV.

Battle of Germantown—Washington encamps at White-marsh—Winter-quarters at Valley Forge—Secret enemies—Intense sufferings of the army—Apparent indifference of Congress—Washington prays—Visits of old friends—Baron Steuben—News of Burgoyne's surrender in England—Proposals for peace—They are rejected by the United States—Treaties with France—British troops evacuate Philadelphia—Troubles between France and England—Battle of Monmouth—Washington pursues the enemy—Conduct of General Lee—Court-Martial—Arrival of French fleet in the Delaware—Consultations with French officers—Unsuccessful expedition.

LORD CORNWALLIS and a large part of the British army had entered and occupied Philadelphia, while Lord Howe remained for a short time at Germantown. General Washington determined, therefore, to attack the enemy at the latter place, while their forces were thus divided. On the 3d of October, after dark, the march began, and they reached the British camp and opened the attack soon after daybreak, taking the unsuspecting inmates entirely by surprise.

At first, the fortunes of the day seemed to be

in favor of the American side, but soon, after a desperate battle, the fog became so thick and dark, as to occasion great confusion in the lines, and the Americans were unable to distinguish their friends from their foes. Thus, although they had already driven the enemy a mile or two, and were on the very verge of victory; the confusion increased as the fog became thicker, and instead of pursuing the flying enemy they took flight themselves, and fled in dismay from the bloody field.

This was the memorable battle of Germantown, in which the patriots lost about one thousand men, in killed, wounded, and missing. But notwithstanding this heavy loss, the effect of the news on the people was decidedly good, as it roused them to activity, and showed them that Americans were indeed in earnest, although powerful invaders were in their midst.

In a few days afterward Washington encamped at Whitemarsh, fourteen miles from the city, where they remained until December 18th, when they removed to Valley Forge, about eight miles further, for winter-quarters. Here they built huts of logs, obtained by cutting down the forest-trees. These huts were ar-

ranged in avenues like streets, twelve men occupying each one, except in cases of those appointed for the general officers, and here they remained until the following June.

Whilst Washington was constantly battling or manœuvring against his open enemies, there were many secret ones at work in his very midst, endeavoring by unworthy means to undermine him, and cast reproach upon his pure and patriotic acts and intentions. A pamphlet of forged letters was published in England and circulated in America which were calculated to do him great injury, and no doubt did prejudice many against him ; but happily all these unjust attempts to deprive him of his hardly earned laurels were fruitless, and are known to have originated in the jealousy of a few who wished to stand in his lofty position. The chief object of the party that was thus working against him, was probably to disgust him, and cause his resignation of the command, when Gates would be recommended as a successor. A kind Providence guarded the interests of the young nation, and averted such a disaster.

The winter of 1778, at Valley Forge, was a

hard one for the army. Hunger and cold tried the patience and fidelity of the men, and their sufferings for want of blankets and clothing were dreadful. This was partly owing to the fact that the British army, only about twenty miles off, were consuming all the provisions within reach, and the inhabitants being nearly all Tories, were more ready to assist the royal troops than the Americans. Out of a little over eleven thousand men at Valley Forge, about twenty-nine hundred were without shoes or decent coverings for their bodies, while the cold was very severe. The only way to secure even a moderate supply of food was to seize it wherever found around the country, giving pledges of payment at the close of the war, a measure which Washington only consented to because of the desperate emergency in which they were placed.

It seemed almost impossible to arouse Congress to realize this extremity, although he so often appealed to them for help, and it is no wonder if he did lose his patience and reproach the members openly for treating his soldiers as if "they were made of stocks and stones, and, as such, insensible to frost and snow."





But, although man's help was slow in coming, the Commander-in-chief looked to a higher fountain for refreshment and comfort. Often would he steal away to a quiet thicket in the forest, and, kneeling down in prayer, would lay his troubles before the Almighty Helper, who alone can govern the unruly wills of men and lighten His servants' burdens. It is said that a Tory once followed, to ascertain what he was doing, and, seeing him in prayer, went and told his friends that their cause was hopeless, for Washington was asking help of God. And we, who know the end of those labors and trials, cannot doubt that this God of Armies both heard and answered him.

By February things became better, and such changes were made in the commissary department as gave them a better supply of the necessities of life. Mrs. Washington came up from Mount Vernon to visit her husband in camp, and several other officers' wives did the same. Also his old friend, Bryan Fairfax, of Belvoir, paid him a short visit, thus reviving many happy memories of the peaceful days at home, in Virginia.

Another distinguished foreigner, who came

out from the French Government to aid the cause at this time, was Baron Steuben, a Prussian officer, who came to Valley Forge in the midst of their distress, but entered heart and soul into the work in which he had sought to assist. During that long winter he acted as drill-master, instructing both officers and men in military tactics, and finally, by Washington's recommendation, receiving the appointment of Inspector-General from Congress.

The news of Burgoyne's surrender caused great consternation in England, and decided the French to take sides with America. Alarmed at this, the English Government at once sent over proposals for peace, offering to modify the taxation, and pardon all offenders, at the same time appointing commissioners to negotiate and arrange particulars. But it was too late; too much blood had already been shed in the cause for them to withdraw now with anything short of independence.

On the 2d of May, just after Congress had declined these proposals from England, a message arrived from France, bringing the welcome news of the two treaties between that nation and the United States—one providing for

friendship and commerce, and the other promising support and alliance until England should acknowledge the independence of this country. These treaties had been signed in Paris on the 6th of February, by the representatives of the two nations.

As may be imagined, the wildest joy prevailed in the camp at Valley Forge when the news came, and the 6th of May was kept as a holiday, in honor of the event.

Another effect of Burgoyne's disaster was the recall of General Howe, who was much blamed for his mismanagement of affairs—Sir Henry Clinton being ordered to take his place. The latter at once proceeded to Philadelphia, and on the 6th of June the three commissioners arrived there from England, bringing the peace proposals before mentioned. Congress was then sitting at Yorktown, Pennsylvania, and on the 17th they gave those gentlemen a decided answer, declining peace on any other terms than independence.

Early in June General Washington discovered symptoms of the intended evacuation of Philadelphia, and was on the alert to ascertain the direction to be taken by the British. These

preparations were in full progress when the commissioners arrived, but the final evacuation did not take place until the 18th, when, with great caution, Sir Henry and his entire army crossed the Delaware, in boats, at the mouth of the Schuylkill, and took up their march across Jersey. As soon as Washington heard of this he sent General Arnold, with a suitable force, to take command of the city, while he at once broke camp at Valley Forge, and pushed on with his whole force to overtake the enemy, who were marching up the east side of the Delaware, toward Trenton.

The treaty of alliance between France and the United States had been considered by England equal to a declaration of war, and orders had therefore been given to Sir Henry Clinton to send five thousand of his troops to attack the French West India Islands, and three thousand more to Florida. Having already sent that number around by sea to New York, his remaining forces were not very large, and Washington, with Lafayette and several of his other generals, thought it best to overtake and give them battle before they should reach New York. General Lee, who had been exchanged

some time before, and was now with them, thought differently.

This division of opinion in the council annoyed Washington, but he was so well convinced of the propriety of his views, that he resolved to act on his own responsibility. Marching through Pennsylvania, he crossed the river above Trenton, and in five days reached Hopewell, five miles from Princeton. The British had gone from Gloucester Point, where they landed, through Haddonfield, Mount Holly, Crosswicks, and Allentown—their long train of wagons and artillery reaching nearly twelve miles. By Washington's foresight, in giving notice of their probable intentions, the bridges on this route had all been destroyed by the Jersey militia, so that their movement was slow, being obliged to stop and build bridges as they went along.

When they did reach Allentown, they found the Americans directly in their front, prepared to fight; but as Sir Henry Clinton did not think it prudent to risk a battle then, he turned aside and pushed forward toward Monmouth Courthouse, now Freehold. He reached that place on the night of the 27th, and perceiving how closely he

was pursued, encamped in a position where he was surrounded by low marshy ground. Next day occurred the battle of Monmouth, in which General Lee's strange acts were further shown in his unwillingness to attack the enemy.

The battle, though not a decisive victory for the Americans, was certainly not a defeat, and the British suffered far more than did their enemies. Of the royalists, four officers and nearly three hundred privates were killed, while the American loss was sixty-nine killed. Besides this, Sir Henry had lost heavily during his march from desertions and prisoners taken, his army being now at least twelve hundred less than when he left Philadelphia.

The British hastened on to Sandy Hook, where Lord Howe's fleet was in waiting to take them to New York. Washington also proceeded to the Hudson River, crossed at King's Ferry, and encamped at White Plains. This long march was accomplished in the hottest weather of the summer, and many of the poor soldiers of both armies died by the way from exhaustion.

General Lee's conduct during the late battle had been very strange for a brave man, such as

he was. He had opposed Washington's opinion in regard to attacking the enemy, and when ordered to lead forward his men, had done so, but retreated almost immediately, before any fighting had been done, which was, under the circumstances, both unwise and unsoldierlike.

As soon as the Commander-in-chief was informed of this he hurried forward, met Lee, with his troops in confusion, and demanded an explanation of his conduct, at the same time ordering the men to be formed in line, and turned back; this prompt action on the part of Washington no doubt saved the whole army. Lee, however, was much offended by the manner in which his superior had spoken to him, and as soon as they had reached a resting-place, he wrote a letter to General Washington, containing such improper language that the latter, in his reply, pronounced it highly disrespectful, at the same time accusing General Lee of "a breach of orders, and of misconduct before the enemy." A court-martial was held at Lee's request during the march, sitting at every stopping-place, and lasting until the 12th of August, when a verdict of "guilty" was rendered, and he was sentenced to be suspended from all com-

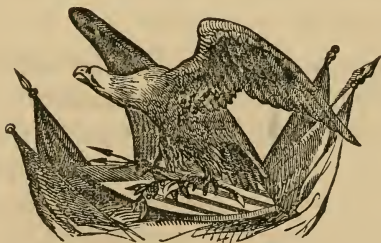
mand for twelve months. Congress approved the sentence, but Lee preferred to leave the army altogether, and retired to his home, in Virginia, dying a few years afterwards while on a visit to Philadelphia.

On the 13th of July, before Washington had crossed the Hudson, news was sent him of the arrival of a French fleet at the Capes of the Delaware, consisting of twelve ships of the line and six frigates, with four thousand soldiers. On one of the vessels came Monsieur Girard, the first minister from France to the United States.

The Count D'Estaing, who commanded this fleet, had hoped to arrive in time to entrap the British ships in the Delaware; but, owing to the long voyage of nearly ninety days, it had come too late to do that. Finding that Lord Howe had gone to Sandy Hook, the Count sent up one frigate with Monsieur Girard to Philadelphia, and with the other vessels set sail at once for the neighborhood of the enemy, where Washington's messages of welcome and congratulation reached him.

The first plan of action proposed, was for Count D'Estaing to engage the British fleet at

Sandy Hook, while the Americans attacked the army on land ; but this was found to be impossible, on account of the shallow water on the bar, which prevented the heavy French ships from passing up ; they therefore changed the point of attack to the Rhode Island coast, where there was stationed a body of British troops, with a few ships. The Count started on the expedition, but for various reasons it was unsuccessful, chiefly owing to the stormy weather, and the French fleet was forced to put into Boston harbor, in a disabled condition. Here they remained to refit until November.



CHAPTER XVI.

Indian massacre in Wyoming—Admiral Byron's fleet—Departure of the French fleet—British expedition to Georgia—Americans in winter-quarters—Indifference of Congress—Pressure for money—Troops sent to punish the Indians—Invasion of New England—Washington proceeds up the Hudson—Captures—Fortifications at West Point—Dinner at headquarters—Army at Morristown—Cold winter—Paper-money—Return of General Lafayette—Prospect of relief from France—Blockade at Newport—General Arnold becomes a traitor—Washington deceived by him—Major André—Arnold's baseness—André's capture—Arnold's escape—Washington's surprise—Execution of André—Arnold enters the British service—The captors of Major André—Congress rewards them.

DURING this summer, while the army was occupied in the manner just related, the Indian massacre in the valley of Wyoming took place. It was set on foot and conducted by the same Tories and Indians that had retreated with St. Leger to Canada, and was intended to surprise, lay waste, and desolate the beautiful region of Central Pennsylvania on both sides of the Susquehanna. In carrying out their horrid designs

they spared none, although many of the women and children escaped in terror to the settlements on the eastern border of the State—their houses being burned, and every trace of improvement destroyed, while the merciless savages and their unprincipled allies tomahawked and scalped every man they could find. At least four hundred of those ill-fated farmers fell victims to the destroyers, who made good their escape before Washington's troops, sent out for that purpose, could capture them.

In September another English squadron made its appearance, under command of Admiral Byron, who came to take charge of the British naval forces—Lord Howe having already resigned, and followed his brother to England. In November the admiral proceeded to Boston with his fleet, intending to entrap the French there; but a heavy storm drove him out to sea again, and gave the French fleet time to sail out and escape. The latter sailed to the West Indies, and thus the Americans were once more left to themselves, without having had much aid or protection either from ships or soldiers.

It was at the end of this month (December), that the British began an expedition against

Georgia, which was to operate both by land and water. On the 29th their troops were landed near Savannah, and by the middle of the next month they had subdued and taken possession of the whole State.

Washington now placed his troops in winter-quarters—his lines extending from Long Island Sound across Jersey to the Delaware; by this arrangement he could better guard against the plans of the enemy on both sides. Much of his own time during the early part of 1779 was passed in Philadelphia, where he was arranging plans for the next campaign. But, as usual, he had great trouble in getting Congress to act as they ought in this time of uncertainty. Some of the members thought the war was nearly over, and England would be too much occupied in the quarrel with France to pursue American affairs any further; others had lost their enthusiasm, and remained quietly at their homes, while many more were too busy with gayety and dissipation to care for the wants of their country. All this was very disheartening to Washington, who foresaw the need of preparing for a vigorous defence in the spring.

Nothing of importance occurred until May,

when a considerable force was sent out to punish the Indians for their atrocious massacres at Wyoming and Cherry valleys; this expedition succeeded in driving them out of the regions around the Alleghany and the Mohawk rivers, and finally into Canada, where they were received by the British garrison at Niagara.

The first movement of the enemy this year was an invasion into Virginia merely for purposes of plunder, and, after burning a few towns, sinking or burning ships, capturing stores, etc., the troops returned to New York. Being there joined by other vessels and a fresh body of troops, the squadron next sailed up the Hudson, to attack the American posts at Stony Point and Verplanck's Point, near King's Ferry.

So sudden were these movements of Sir Henry Clinton, and the forts at these two points being yet in an unfinished state, that they were easily taken by the great force at hand; but Washington lost no time in collecting his own army from their different stations in Jersey, and placing them in such a position as to prevent the fleet from going any further up the river.

An invasion of New England took place in July. A detachment of over two thousand men,

sailing up Long Island Sound, landed at New Haven, where they destroyed many stores. From there they went to Fairfield and Norwalk, which were both in turn laid in ashes, while everywhere on the road the people were outraged, and their homes and valuables burnt or plundered. Having satisfied themselves for the present, they then returned to their ships and sailed away before the militia could assemble in sufficient numbers to resist them.

The real object of this last movement was to draw Washington away from the Hudson; but he was too cautious to be thus thrown off his guard. So far from leaving his posts there, he took advantage of this favorable time to recover possession of Stony Point, which he did on the night of the 15th of July, taking many prisoners and much valuable artillery, small-arms, ammunition, and other military stores. General Wayne, who conducted the enterprise, with Colonels Fleury and Stewart, received medals from Congress, struck in honor of the deed. After the capture, however, Washington found it best to evacuate it, which he accordingly did, bringing away all the captured stores.

About a month afterward they surprised the

British post at Paulus Hook, opposite New York, and took one hundred and fifty-nine prisoners—losing only two of their own number. Major Henry Lee, who originated and carried out the plan, was presented with a gold medal commemorating the event.

During the remainder of the summer the extensive works at West Point were carried on vigorously, and Washington took up his headquarters there at the close of July. Some idea of his simple style of living at this time may be gained from a letter written by him to the Surgeon-General on the 16th of August, 1779, in which he invites the doctor's wife and another lady to dine. It shows, also, that even in the midst of his anxieties he could be cheerful, and even playful. After the invitation, he goes on to let them know what kind of fare they may expect, as follows :

“Since our arrival at this happy spot, we have had a ham, sometimes a shoulder of bacon, to grace the head of the table ; a piece of roast beef adorns the foot ; and a dish of beans, or greens, almost imperceptible, decorates the centre. When the cook has a mind to cut a figure, which I presume will be the case to-

morrow, we have two beef-steak pies, or dishes of crabs, in addition, one on each side of the centre dish, dividing the space; and reducing the distance between dish and dish to about six feet, which, without them, would be near twelve feet apart. Of late he has had the surprising sagacity to discover that apples will make pies; and it is a question, whether, in the violence of his efforts, we do not get one of apples instead of having both of beef-steaks. If the ladies can put up with such entertainment, and will submit to partake of it on plates; once tin but now iron (not become so by the labor of scouring), I shall be happy to see them; and am, dear Doctor, yours, &c."

No doubt the ladies enjoyed their dinner, in spite of the iron plates and short bill of fare.

That year the main body of the army went into winter-quarters at Morristown—a large portion being stationed at West Point, and other posts on the Hudson, and also at one or two points in Connecticut. Besides these, the news of recent defeat in South Carolina, and the sailing of Sir Henry Clinton's fleet with more troops for that quarter, induced the American commander to despatch thither two regiments

from North Carolina, with all that could be collected in Virginia. These forces marched for Charleston about the middle of December.

At the North the winter was unusually severe, and again the troops were bare of clothing and shoes, as well as food. In many respects the horrors of the winter at Valley Forge were repeated this year on the bleak hills of Morristown; but supplies were at length obtained from the Jersey farmers, who brought in food for the famishing soldiers, and received, in return, certificates promising payment at some future time. So unusual was the cold that New York Bay was frozen over, and the British began to fear that the Americans might cross on the ice and attack the city of New York.

One of the greatest sources of trouble at this time was the paper currency which Congress had issued in large quantities, in order to meet the expenses of the war, but which had gradually depreciated, until the price of every article became enormous, and *forty* dollars of paper-money was worth only *one* in gold.

In April, 1780, General Lafayette, who had been on a visit to France, returned to America, bringing the cheering news that another fleet

was about sailing to our relief. On the 10th of July it arrived, and entered the harbor of Newport, Rhode Island. It consisted of eight ships of the line, two frigates, two bombs, and five thousand troops, the fleet being under the command of Chevalier de Ternay, Count de Rochambeau having charge of the land forces. Another fleet was ready to sail from France at the same time, but was detained at Brest.

General Lafayette was at once despatched to consult with the French officers, and arrange the plan for a naval attack ; but the British navy about this time was re-enforced by the arrival of Admiral Graves with six ships of the line, and it was already quite extensive, Sir Henry Clinton's fleet having lately returned from the attack on Charleston. Nothing could therefore be done until the other ships could come from Brest.

Sir Henry Clinton was very anxious to do something, however, but did not dare to withdraw any of his forces from New York while Washington and his army were so near by, so he contented himself with sending Admiral Arbuthnot with a part of the fleet to blockade the French squadron at Newport. This being done

pretty effectually, it prevented any action during the season.

And now we must notice the conduct of General Benedict Arnold, who had been placed in charge of Philadelphia by Washington, some eighteen months before, but whose extravagant mode of living had given rise to very disagreeable rumors. By degrees these rumors began to assume such a serious shape that Congress took notice of them, and ordered a trial by court-martial. This was done, and he was sentenced to be publicly reprov'd by the Commander-in-chief. Besides this, there was pretty strong evidence of his having defrauded the Government, and it is probable that the mortification caused by these discoveries, as well as the punishment, made him desperate, and he resolved to revenge himself. To accomplish this he became a traitor, and opened a secret correspondence with the enemy, through Major André, Adjutant-General of the British army.

With the sole object of furthering these unworthy designs he applied to be placed in command at West Point, and from the high opinion which Washington still held respecting his bravery and judgment, the appointment was

made, and he arrived there about the first of August, and prepared to carry out his grand scheme of delivering that and all the other posts of the Hudson River to the enemy, as soon as the opportunity offered. The time came soon for which Arnold had waited, for Washington had gone to Hartford, to see the French officers, and the traitor, dreading his vigilance more than any thing else, availed himself of this brief absence to undertake the deed.

Having laid his plans, the British sloop of war "Vulture" came up the Hudson, and anchored a few miles below King's Ferry, having on board Major André, who was to go ashore and meet Arnold in the night, on the west side of the river. The meeting took place on the 21st of September, and they continued the conference until morning, Arnold giving to André the fullest information, with plans of the works, which the latter placed inside of his stockings.

During the night, while these wicked negotiations were going on, the "Vulture" had been fired on by the American cannon, and forced to drop further down the stream, so Arnold advised André to ride down to New York, instead of attempting to gain the vessel, which he at length

reluctantly decided to do. Crossing the river in a boat to Verplanck's Point, and then taking the road that led most directly to the British lines, he hurried on, but had not gone far, when he was surprised by three men, who stepped out of a thicket, pointed a musket at his head, and called on him to dismount. Supposing they were Tories from their dress, the chief spokesman, Paulding, being arrayed in a shabby refugee's coat, he was at once thrown off his guard, and confessed himself a British officer who had been up the country on important business. Great was his horror at discovering that they were Americans, and that he had betrayed himself; but he endeavored to contradict the story, while they, preferring to believe his first account, made him their prisoner. Upon searching his person the plans and instructions given him by Arnold were found in his boots, which convinced them that he was a spy, and they set out without delay to take him to North Castle, the nearest American post, where Lieutenant-Colonel Jameson was commanding. The latter at once recognized Arnold's handwriting in the captured documents, and forwarded them without delay to General Washington at Hartford,

at the same time sending notice to Arnold at West Point.

Unfortunately the messenger to Hartford took the lower route, while Washington, having finished his business, had left that place a few hours before by the upper road. By this means they missed each other, and the news of André's capture reached Arnold a few hours before the Commander-in-chief arrived at West Point.

Of course, the traitor thought only of escape, and, pretending that urgent business called him away, he ordered the men to row him down the river, holding up a white handkerchief as a flag of truce to the officer at Verplanck's Point, by which he was permitted to pass down to where the Vulture still waited for André. Once aboard of this, he was among friends who would protect him from a traitor's doom.

In the afternoon of the same day Washington received the papers, together with a letter from André, revealing his name and rank. Up to that time they had not known his real name, as he had passed as John Anderson. André was at once taken to West Point, and afterwards to Tappan village, where he was tried, convicted, and sentenced to be hung as a spy. There

were many things which entitled him to pity, and even sympathy, for he was far less guilty than Arnold, who had so shamelessly betrayed his country ; and gladly would the generous-hearted Washington have spared his life, if the good of that same country had not required justice before mercy in such a case. He was, therefore, executed at Tappan, on the 2d of October, and buried near the spot, where his body remained until 1821, when it was removed by the British consul at New York, taken to England, and laid in Westminster Abbey.

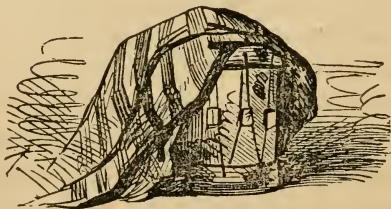
Arnold received a commission of brigadier-general in the British army, besides a large sum of money, but through all his after-life he was an object of scorn, both in America and England.

General Washington showed his kindness and humanity by his treatment of Mrs. Arnold, in having her conveyed in safety to her friends in Philadelphia.

One little circumstance connected with the above history is, perhaps, worth mentioning before we leave the subject. Paulding, who first captured André, had been twice a prisoner in the loathsome British dungeons at New York,

but had made his escape a few days before, wearing the old refugee coat that had been given him by the enemy in return for his own new garment taken away from him. It was this coat, as we have said, which deceived André, and probably led to the discovery of the treason which might have brought destruction upon the American cause. So mysteriously does God bring about His designs. In a letter to Colonel Laurens, Washington acknowledges the wonderful interposition of Providence in thus rescuing the post and garrison of West Point from Arnold's perfidy.

The captors of Major André—Paulding, Williams, and Van Wart—were all rewarded by Congress for their services, each receiving a farm, a pension of two hundred dollars for life, and a silver medal.



CHAPTER XVII.

Proceedings of the British in the South—Washington's kindness to General Gates—Seat of war transferred to the South—Battle of Cowpens—General Greene in command—He retreats toward Virginia—Cornwallis pursues—Battle of Guilford Court House—British retreat to Wilmington, N. C.—Greene's successful attack on Camden, S. C.—Battle of Eutaw Springs—Arnold's base acts—Mount Vernon threatened by a British ship—Washington's projects in the North—Change of plans—Washington leads the army into Virginia—Siege of Yorktown—Surrender of Lord Cornwallis—Thanksgivings and rejoicings over the event—Death of Parke Custis—Prospects of peace—Lafayette returns to France—Washington at Newburg—Proposals to make him king—Dissatisfaction of the soldiers—Washington's wise counsels—Treaty of peace—Farewell address—British evacuate New York—Return to Mount Vernon.

FOR some time past the British, under Lord Cornwallis, had been overrunning the Carolinas, and were now preparing to extend their conquests into Virginia. General Washington, therefore, sent General Greene to take command of the American troops in that quarter, in place of Gates, who had lost much of the

popularity he had striven so hard to gain from General Schuyler in the North. Had it not been for the brave Marion and Sumter, with their bands of daring backwoodsmen, who drove Cornwallis out of Charlotte, North Carolina, the South had been by this time fairly overcome by the enemy.

On the 2d of December General Greene arrived at Charlotte, which was then the headquarters of Gates. The kindness and consideration shown both by Washington and himself toward the vanquished Gates, who was at this time in great affliction at the loss of his only son, quite won his heart, and lightened the mortification of his position. With feelings thus softened, he left the army, and retired to his home, at Berkely, Va.

Near the end of the year (1780), the Northern army went into winter-quarters at different points in the neighborhood of New York ; but the scene of active operations was now transferred to the South, where Cornwallis was using all his efforts to drive Greene from his position in North Carolina.

On the 17th of January, 1781, occurred the battle of Cowpens, in which Cornwallis's forces

were badly beaten and driven back to his camp on Turkey Creek. After this came long and toilsome marches—General Greene choosing to retreat toward Virginia, where he expected re-enforcements. Cornwallis followed closely behind, hoping to get between the Americans and their re-enforcements, and in this hope he pursued them until they reached the river Dan, on the borders of Virginia. Here the Americans crossed in safety, but, a heavy rain falling in the night, caused the river to rise so suddenly, that, when the enemy reached the banks, they found it impossible to proceed further.

After a day or two the river began to subside, but Cornwallis did not think it prudent to continue the pursuit, and so the tables were turned—the British setting out on a retreat, and the Americans hastening after them.

On the 15th of March was fought the battle of Guilford Courthouse,—a defeat, perhaps, to the Americans, but even worse for the British, as one-quarter of their little army was either killed or disabled, with no chance of recruiting, or recovering its position. . Cornwallis continued his retreat after a brief rest, and Greene pursued until they reached Deep River, where the

British had destroyed the bridge behind them : this, of course, ended the pursuit, but Cornwallis continued his retreat to Wilmington.

He had not been there long, when he heard that Greene had gone to Camden, S. C., where Lord Rawdon was stationed in command of the British forces. This was bad news for him, but he resolved to make the best of the present chance to march through North Carolina and join another part of his army in Virginia, an undertaking which he accomplished by the 20th of May.

General Greene's attack on Camden ended in the evacuation of the place by the British, who also set it on fire as they were leaving ; but his march through South Carolina was successful, though several severe battles and skirmishes took place on the way, resulting in his regaining a great portion of Georgia, and the two Carolinas. On the 8th of September was fought the battle of Eutaw Springs, a victory for the Americans.

Arnold was now engaged in burning the quiet towns of Virginia, and other traitorous acts, but was never in full command, as even the British themselves did not dare to trust him with too



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British had destroyed the Indian habitations, this old nation could not depart, but Cornwallis continued his march to Wilmington.

He did not tarry there long, when he moved on again, and came to Camden, S. C., where James Mifflin was stationed in command of the British forces. There he had news for him, but he resolved to march. The host of the present change he made through North Carolina and a small part of his army in Virginia the independent of the movement he made on the 17th of Aug.

There was a great deal of discussion in the army as to whether or not to march. This also was the case as they were leaving, but the march through South Carolina was successful, though several severe battles and skirmishes took place on the way, ending in his regaining a great portion of Georgia, and the two Carolinas. On the 11th of September was fought the battle of Eutaw Springs, a victory for the British.

As the British were turning the great river, they were met by the American army, but were driven back, and even the British could not stand him with his



Washington's Head-Quarters at Cambridge.

much authority. He was only a *brevet* brigadier-general,—that is, having the title without the pay, thus being in reality only a major. At this time one of the enemy's vessels sailed up the Potomac and threatened to burn Mount Vernon unless the overseer should supply them with provisions: in his surprise and bewilderment the faithful man did this, there being no time for consultation, and he could not bear the thought of his master's house being destroyed during his absence. But when Washington heard of it, he expressed his regret, saying that he would rather have heard of even that disaster, than to endure the mortification of yielding to such a request.

In the North, Washington was busy in planning an attack on New York, in which he was to be assisted by the French army and navy. The latter were to sail for Sandy Hook, and begin the attack by sea; but before this order reached the French admiral, de Grasse, the latter had already sailed from the West Indies for the Chesapeake, which news reached Washington on the 14th of August. This at once caused him to change his plans, and he resolved to lead the combined forces himself into Virginia, leav-

ing only enough behind to guard the posts on the Hudson. Lafayette, who was in command of the army in Virginia, was delighted to hear that the Commander-in-chief was coming, and the unbounded love and confidence felt toward him, soon became evident from the feelings and spirits of the troops.

After a brief pause at Mount Vernon, they pushed on to Yorktown, where they found Cornwallis, on the 30th of September, completely shut in by the French and American troops, with the French fleet guarding the sea-coast.

A siege was now determined on, for the British had retired within their fortifications, and on the 9th of October the first gun was fired on the town. The firing lasted until the 17th, when Lord Cornwallis asked for a cessation of hostilities, until terms of surrender could be agreed upon. On the 19th, the articles of capitulation were signed, and the royal army laid down their arms.

For this great event, which was to send joy into the heart of every patriot in the land, Washington returned devout thanks to Almighty God, and had divine service celebrated for that pur-

pose in the camp at Yorktown, a special thanksgiving-day being afterward appointed by Congress. Thanks were also voted to Washington, to Count de Rochambeau, and Admiral de Grasse, with others who had assisted in bringing about the glorious victory, while a marble column was ordered to be erected at Yorktown, to commemorate the event.

While in the midst of these rejoicings, General Washington was summoned to attend the death-bed of his stepson, John Parke Custis, who died at the age of twenty-eight, leaving a widow and four young children, the two youngest of which were adopted by Washington, and lived with him during the remainder of his life.

It was now evident that the war could not last much longer, but it was still necessary to be prepared and vigilant, in case the British should undertake another campaign; and in this opinion Congress fully agreed with him.

Toward the close of 1781, Lafayette, who had done such good service in the late campaign, returned on a visit to France, with the thanks and commendations of Congress.

In April, 1782, General Washington joined the army at Newburg, on the Hudson; and in May,

Sir Guy Carleton arrived from England to take the place of Sir Henry Clinton, who had grown weary of the war, and desired to be relieved. Sir Guy brought assurances of a desire for peace on the part of Great Britain, but as nothing official had been sent, there was nothing to be done but to prepare for more fighting. At this time also, Washington received a letter from one of his own officers, proposing that he should become king of the new nation for whose independence they were fighting, but his nature was too noble to listen to such an idea, and he sharply rebuked the author of the letter, desiring that such a sentiment should never be uttered again.

During the remainder of this year and the next summer, much dissatisfaction prevailed among the soldiers, who had been unpaid for a long while, and several anonymous addresses were prepared and circulated, stirring up the feelings of both officers and men to a high degree. In these papers Congress was charged with ingratitude to the soldiers who had risked their all for the common cause, and the men were urged to assemble and see whether some means could not be found for redress, rather

than quietly bear with the sorrows of poverty and dependence during the rest of their lives, in return for seven years of privation and suffering.

But however just these sentiments may have been, the wisdom of Washington readily perceived that the effect of such appeals would be very bad for the cause, and he therefore called a meeting of the officers and soldiers, which was held on the 15th of March. There, he read a paper which he had carefully prepared in answer to the anonymous ones to which we have alluded, in which he urged them to await calmly the action of Congress, assuring them of his own intention to aid them as much as possible. During the reading of this paper, it is said that he took out his glasses and put them on, remarking that he had "grown gray in his country's service, and was growing blind also, but he had never doubted either its justice or its gratitude."

The effect of that elegant address, appealing to their honor and patriotism, which he had so often proved, was just what he desired, and through his powerful influence the troubles were set at rest, and in due time Congress:

rewarded the services of the veterans as they deserved.

At length, on the 23d of March, came the welcome news that a treaty of peace had been signed at Paris on the 20th of January, 1783, and in a few days' afterward the close of hostilities was proclaimed by the British commander. Congress also proclaimed the war at an end, and ordered that furloughs should be granted to the men, who gladly returned to their homes and resumed once more the peaceful occupations of former years.

On the 2d of November Washington's celebrated farewell address to the armies of the United States was sent forth, in which he takes an affectionate and paternal leave of those who had so long been associated together under his command.

On the 25th of the same month the British evacuated New York, and embarked for England, leaving the Americans to take quiet possession of the city. The parting scene between Washington and his officers was impressive and deeply affecting, and each one solemnly approached and took the hand of the Commander-in-chief, who, with a few words of congratulation

and blessing, not without manly tears in his eyes, returned the embrace.

He lingered for a day or two in Philadelphia, on his way to Annapolis, adjusting his accounts with the Comptroller of the Treasury. These had been kept with the greatest exactness during the whole war, and were neatly written in his own hand, including all the expenses of the war, amounting to fourteen thousand five hundred pounds sterling. As for himself, he neither asked nor received any pay, but on the contrary had often advanced money from his own purse to meet emergencies, when the public one was empty.

But one thing remained now to be done, and that was, to resign his commission into the hands of Congress, from whom he had received it. This took place on the 23d of December, at Annapolis, where Congress was then sitting. Having thus finished his glorious career as Commander-in-chief of the army, he left the hall amid the cheers and praises of the whole assembled crowd of spectators. Then, proceeding at once to Mount Vernon, he arrived there on Christmas eve, and we may well imagine that he was fully prepared to enjoy that sacred and

happy season once more amongst his own family, having visited his home but twice, when on his way to and from Yorktown, during the last eight years.



CHAPTER XVIII.

The quiet winter at Mount Vernon—Hospitalities—Changes among his friends—Letter from Jacob Van Braam—Visit of Lafayette—Grief at parting with him.

IN thus retiring to his quiet home, Washington hoped to bid adieu forever to public life, and settle down to partake, in common with others, of the blessings of liberty and independence.

A cold winter kept the inmates of Mount Vernon within-doors most of the time until spring, but the master of those large estates found employment enough in looking over his private accounts, and preparing for the coming spring. When spring did come, there were many visitors from all parts of the land, who came to show their respect and gratitude to the man who held the highest place in the esteem and affection of his country; and they were all received with hospitality and kindness, although

his personal attention was given to his farm through a portion of each day.

• Changes had, of course, taken place among his neighbors, and some were no longer there to renew the pleasant associations of the past. His early friend, Lord Fairfax, lived at Greenway Court until after the surrender of Cornwallis, which news so affected his English feelings that he died soon after, in the ninety-second year of his age.

We quote from Weems' Life of Washington the following quaint verses :

“When old Lord Fairfax heard that Washington had captured Lord Cornwallis and all his army, he called to his black waiter, ‘Come, Joe! carry me to bed, for it is high time for me to die!’”

“Then up rose Joe, all at the word,
And took his master's arm,
And thus to bed he softly led
The lord of Greenway farm.

“There oft he called on Britain's name,
And oft he wept full sore,
Then sighed, ‘Thy will, O Lord, bedone’—
And word spake never more.”

Belvoir, the pleasant home of the other Fairfaxes, had been burnt to the ground during his absence, and was now a mass of ruins. His old friend, George William Fairfax, was in England, having preferred to stand aloof from the contest.

But in his own home at Mount Vernon was contained all that he now desired to complete his happiness, although it required some little time for him to become altogether accustomed to the new state of affairs. After so many years of camp life, surrounded with warlike sights and sounds, it was hard to realize at first that all this was changed, and there was no longer a necessity for anxiety and fears.

In writing to General Knox, he says : " I am just beginning to experience that ease and freedom from public cares which, however desirable, takes some time to realize ; for, strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that it was not till lately I could get the better of my usual custom of ruminating, as soon as I waked in the morning, on the business of the ensuing day ; and of my surprise at finding, after revolving many things in my mind, that I was no longer a public man, nor had anything to do

with public transactions. I feel now, however, as I conceive a wearied traveller must do, who, after treading many a painful step with a heavy burden on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the haven to which all the former were directed; and from his house-top is looking back, and tracing with an eager eye the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay in his way, and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling."

To his attached friend and fellow-soldier, Lafayette, to whose generous assistance and faithful services our country owes such a debt of gratitude, he wrote also to express his peaceful feelings of perfect contentment in his quiet home; and in a letter to the Marchioness de Lafayette, he invites her to come to the United States, to see the "young, rude, and uncultivated" land, for which her noble husband had fought. He says, "I am now enjoying domestic ease, under the shadows of my own vine and my own fig-tree, in a small villa, with the implements of husbandry and lambkins about me.
* * * Come, then, let me entreat you, and

call my cottage your own, for your doors do not open to you with more readiness than mine would. You will see the plain manner in which we live, and meet with rustic civility; and you shall taste the simplicity of rural life. It will diversify the scene, and may give you a higher relish for the gayeties of the court when you return to Versailles."

As might be supposed, the prosperity and productiveness of the estates had not improved during this long absence of the master, and those winter months were busy ones, although mostly passed within-doors. There were plans to be prepared for the spring, and it was necessary to look well to his expenditures, and economize too, for the war had made heavy demands on his private purse.

The crowd of visitors who came to Mount Vernon were welcomed to his table, and received both by himself and Mrs. Washington with hospitality. It was with a view to relieve him in some measure from the expenses which must thus necessarily grow out of his great popularity, that the government of Pennsylvania made a movement toward an appropriation of money for his use; but having heard of the propo-

sition before it was accomplished, he very promptly declined it, preferring to be at some personal loss for the sake of the country he had served.

It was during that winter that Washington received a long letter from Jacob Van Braam, the drill-master who first instructed him in the use of the sword, at nineteen years of age, just at the opening of the French and Indian war. He had heard of his old pupil's success, and no doubt felt proud to offer his congratulations. He had himself served in the English ranks, but was then living quietly in France, where he probably ended his days.

On the 17th of August, 1784, Lafayette arrived at Mount Vernon, and spent two weeks with his cherished friend; then, after several months' absence to visit other places, and witness a treaty with the Indians, during which time Washington was also absent on an expedition to look after his lands on the Ohio and Monongahela rivers, they met again at Richmond, and returned together to pass a few more pleasant days in social intercourse.

When the time came for him to take his final leave, Washington accompanied him to Annapo-

lis, as if to enjoy to the latest moment the company of one he loved so well.

A farewell letter, written after his return to Mount Vernon, expressed his tender feelings toward the departed guest, and showed how sadly he realized that this would be their last meeting on earth. He says :

“ In the moment of our separation, upon the road as I travelled, and every hour since, I have felt all that love, respect, and attachment for you, with which length of years, close connections, and your merit have inspired me. I often asked myself, as our carriages separated, whether that was the last sight I ever should have of you ? And, though I wished to answer no, my fears answered yes. I called to mind the days of my youth, and found that they had long since fled to return no more ; that I was now descending the hill I had been fifty-two years in climbing, and that, though I was blessed with a good constitution, I was of a short-lived family, and might soon expect to be entombed in the mansion of my fathers. These thoughts darkened the shades, and gave a gloom to the picture, and consequently to my prospect of ever seeing you again.”

When Lafayette came again to visit America, in August, 1824, and was received with joy as the nation's guest, his friend had departed, and he could only weep as a little child over his grave.



CHAPTER XIX.

Washington's interest in public improvements—Establishment of the Potomac and James river companies—Extent of Mount Vernon—Regular hours—Washington laughing at the judges—Death of General Greene—Unsettled state of the government—Meeting of the general convention—Washington chosen president—His triumphant journey to the capital—Reception at Trenton—His inauguration—Rejoicings at New York.

FROM what we have said of Washington's domestic habits, and his interests and occupations at Mount Vernon, it may possibly be supposed that he had at this time quite shut himself off from public affairs; but this was not the case. Now that the war was over, and peaceful employments began again to occupy the people's mind, they naturally looked around to consider what were the best means for promoting the agricultural and commercial interests of the country. There were large tracts of land whose resources were not yet developed, and rivers whose waters were still scarcely navigated.

The Potomac and James rivers, which inter-

sected so wide an expanse of country, were of great importance to the States of Virginia and Maryland; and through the exertions of Washington, two companies were formed for opening their navigation.

He was appointed president of both companies, and as a mark of gratitude and esteem, the government of Virginia presented him with one hundred and fifty shares, or about \$40,000 worth of the stock. But with his customary unwillingness to receive any reward for his services to his country, he declined to accept them for his own benefit, yet held them in trust for the endowment of some college or institution of learning.

Among the papers still preserved at Mount Vernon is a diagram or drawing of the lawns and grounds about his house, made by himself, with the places marked on it for particular trees and shrubs, which he intended to plant there. These trees are many of them still standing, and the holly hedges, now so large and luxuriant in growth, came from the seeds that Washington sowed in little furrows during those first months after the war was ended.

The estate of Mount Vernon was of itself a

large one ; but, besides this, there were four other farms adjoining it, over which he had placed overseers, who managed them subject to his direction. Altogether, the whole amount of land included in the domain was three thousand two hundred and sixty acres, besides several hundred acres of woodland. His livestock consisted of fifty-four horses, twelve mules, three hundred and seventeen head of cattle, and three hundred and sixty sheep, besides many swine, which last ran loose in the woods. Yet, with all this vast estate, he knew every field, and what kinds of crops were best suited to the soil. He studied works on agriculture and gardening, and obtained the best varieties of seeds and shrubs, while, in managing his farms, he kept the most exact accounts, and required the same precision in those he employed.

Many might well wonder how he found hours enough in the day for all this work ; for, besides the general supervision of his estate, there were letters without number daily pouring in upon him from all parts of the country ; artists came to paint his portraits ; and visitors, led thither by curiosity or esteem, were constantly invading his seclusion. But his day's work be-

gan. before the dawn, and much of his correspondence was accomplished while the rest of the household slept.

At half-past seven he breakfasted, after which he mounted his horse, and took the circuit of his estate, which gave him a ride of ten or twelve miles each morning. Half-past two was his hour for dinner, which was always a plain but plentiful repast. After dinner he entertained his guests, or, if no company were there, he would write until dark, and in the evening he enjoyed the society of his family, which consisted of his wife and her grandchildren, the children of Parke Custis.

He is said to have been "a silent and thoughtful man," yet one or two instances are given by his biographers in which he was known to laugh heartily at some amusing scene. On one occasion, several years after the Revolution, Judge Marshall and Judge Washington, a relative of the General, were on their way, on horseback, to visit Mount Vernon, attended by a black servant, who had charge of a large portmanteau containing their clothes. As they passed through a wood on the skirts of the Mount Vernon ground, they were tempted to make a

hasty toilet beneath its shade, being covered with dust from the state of the roads. Dismounting, they threw off their dusty garments, while the servant took down the portmanteau. As he opened it, out flew cakes of Windsor soap, and fancy articles of all kinds. The man, by mistake, had changed their portmanteau at the last stopping-place for one which resembled it, belonging to a Scotch pedler. The consternation of the negro, and their own dismantled state, struck them so ludicrously as to produce loud and repeated bursts of laughter. Washington, who happened to be out upon his grounds, was attracted by the noise, and so overcome by the strange plight of his friends, and the whimsicality of the whole scene, that he is said to have actually rolled on the grass with laughter.”*

It was during this season of quiet retirement, that Washington received the news of the death of his friend and compatriot, General Greene, who died at his home in Georgia, at the age of forty-four. “He was a great and good man,” writes Washington, who mourned for him as for a brother.

* Note by Washington Irving.

Up to this time, there had been no permanent system of government agreed upon for the United States. Each State governed itself by its own legislature, but no general constitution had as yet been adopted for the perfect establishment of a *federal* union, or binding together of the whole thirteen States to form one undivided nation. The different States held differing views on many points, and from his quiet home Washington watched anxiously until all these important matters should be settled.

In many quarters the people were afraid to trust Congress with too much liberty, lest the rights of State governments should be encroached on; but this fear Washington openly proclaimed to be "the very climax of popular absurdity and madness." He saw plainly trouble was at hand, and that the very people who had fought so bravely for the liberty to govern themselves, were now ready to quarrel about the proper way in which they should do it.

In Massachusetts troubles began to assume a serious form, and in the autumn of 1786, this spirit of dissension broke out into open rebellion. Providentially, however, it was checked without much actual bloodshed.

But good men and true patriots still lived in all parts of the land, and through their urgency it was decided at length that a general convention should be held in the spring of 1787, at Philadelphia. This was to consist of delegates from all the States, and to this body should be intrusted the great duty of framing a Constitution for the new nation.

Washington was a member of the delegation from Virginia, and was chosen to preside over the whole convention. In this work were engaged the greatest minds of the times, and the experience of nearly eighty years has shown us the great value of the Constitution which was then prepared and adopted. During the following year this Constitution was submitted to the votes of the several States, and all but two were in favor of its adoption. Thus, in 1789, the United States were ready to elect their first president, and take position among the great nations of the earth.

And now all eyes were turned to Washington, the man who had worked out the problem of independence, and conducted the new nation to its present auspicious starting-point. Nothing but his true patriotism and earnest interest in the

public welfare could have induced him to leave once more his quiet home ; and in a letter written at that time to one of his friends, he thus expresses his feelings :

“The great Searcher of human hearts is my witness that I have no wish which aspires beyond the humble and happy lot of living and dying a private citizen on my own farm.”

But a strong conviction of duty compelled him to accept the office of President of the United States, to which he was unanimously elected by all the thirteen States.

On the 16th of April, 1789, he set out for New York, which was then the capital of the nation, having first paid a farewell visit to his mother at Fredericksburg. She was at that time suffering from an incurable disease, and the thought that this was probably their last meeting in this world, must have saddened both their hearts.

In his diary on the day of his departure for New York, he writes : “About ten o’clock, I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestic felicity ; and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for

New York, with the best disposition to render service to my country, in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations."

As he proceeded on his way, he was met with continued rejoicings and welcomes. Everywhere, bells were rung, cannon were fired, triumphal arches raised, and cavalcades of the most respectable citizens came out to escort him through the towns. It was before the days of railroads or steamboats, so that a private carriage, or on horseback, were the modes by which he travelled.

As he approached Philadelphia, a splendid white horse was led out for him to ride upon, and the numbers of his escort increased by constant accessions from the surrounding country, until a grand procession was formed, which passed under triumphal arches entwined with laurel, and built across the streets through which they were to go.

From Philadelphia he continued his journey through Trenton, crossing the river at the same point where only twelve years before he had made the perilous voyage amid darkness, snow, and floating ice, to surprise the sleeping

Hessians. Now all was changed ; and there, across the same bridge over the Assanpink, where Cornwallis had encamped, and waited for the morning, to give battle to the patriot army, but wakened to find himself out-generalled, and his prize gone, a splendid arch was erected, covered with evergreens, and bearing the inscription—"THE DEFENDER OF THE MOTHERS WILL BE THE PROTECTOR OF THE DAUGHTERS."

Here were assembled the principal ladies of Trenton, who bowed and waved their handkerchiefs as he passed, while the younger ones, dressed in white, and crowned with wreaths, scattered flowers in his path, and sang a song of welcome and gratitude.

Such were the signs of a nation's love which followed him everywhere until his arrival in New York, where, by his own request, he was permitted to walk to his residence, through crowded streets, decorated with flags, garlands, and evergreens.

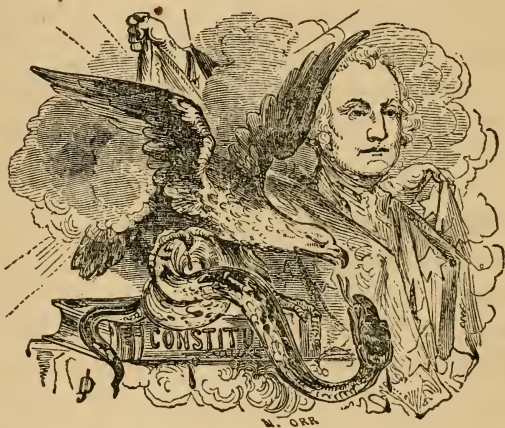
On the 30th of April the inauguration took place on the balcony of the old City Hall, in presence of the immense crowd that had gathered to witness the solemn ceremony. But

previously, at nine o'clock in the morning, religious services were held in all the churches of the city, and prayers were offered, that the blessing of Almighty God might rest upon the new Government.

When Washington appeared on the balcony he was hailed by a universal shout of joy, which was as suddenly hushed into silence as the solemn oath of office was about to be administered. On a table was placed a large Bible, which lay upon a cushion of crimson velvet, and as the oath was read slowly and distinctly by the Chancellor of the State of New York, Washington laid his hand on its open pages. At the conclusion he said with great solemnity, "I swear—so help me God!" Then, bowing down, he reverently kissed the holy book.

When all was over, the Chancellor came forward to the front, and waved his hand to the people, exclaiming, "Long live George Washington, President of the United States!" This was the signal for a general rejoicing, and the event was published by a discharge of artillery and the ringing of bells, with a display of fireworks in the evening.

Returning to the Senate Chamber, the new President delivered his inaugural address, and at its close he proceeded with the entire assembly, on foot, to St. Paul's church, where suitable prayers concluded the services.



CHAPTER XX.

Auspicious beginning of his term of office—Arrangement of hours—His regard for the Lord's Day—Alarming illness—Death of his mother—Her character—Choosing officers—Debt of the country—Hamilton's plan for paying it—Location of the National Capital—Troubles in France—Lafayette sends the key of the Bastille—Visit to Rhode Island—Return to Mount Vernon—Expedition against the Indians—Washington's message to the hostile tribes—Congress meets at Philadelphia—United States Bank chartered—Opposition to the measure.

THUS, with the blessing of God invoked upon his efforts, did this great man begin his administration. No wonder that wisdom marked all his counsels and directed his actions, for he placed his trust in the Ruler of Nations rather than in his own unaided ability. What an example for his successors, both as governors and citizens! As an evidence, too, that he had accepted the office from no motives of gain, he declined at the outset to receive any compensation for his services, beyond what was needed to meet the additional expenses incurred by his public station.

And now, as soon as he had become settled

in his home in New York, he was besieged with office-seekers and visitors, who came either for business or to pay their compliments, and it soon became necessary for him to fix on certain days when he would receive all who chose to come. For any special business he was to be found whenever an interview was desired, but every Tuesday he was at home to all who chose to come, during certain hours; while on Friday evenings Mrs. Washington held her receptions, at which he was also present.

With these arrangements he found rather more time to attend to his own private business and correspondence, as well as to examine the weekly accounts of the manager of Mount Vernon, which were always duly attended to, and answered every week. His interest in agriculture never flagged.

On Sunday morning he always attended Divine service at Trinity Church, or St. Paul's Chapel, and spent the afternoon in the privacy of his own apartment—the evening being passed quietly with his family; but no visitors, unless those most intimately acquainted, were ever admitted on that day.

Before the summer was over Washington was

prostrated with alarming illness, which, for several weeks, seemed to threaten his life; but knowing his danger, he was calm and quiet, and expressed his willingness to die, if the time had come. "Whether to-night, or twenty years hence," he said to the doctor, "makes no difference: I am not afraid to die, and I know that I am in the hands of a good Providence." His sufferings were very great, and for a long time he was unable to lie upon his left side, but by a slow recovery he was once more restored to a measure of health, although he never quite regained his former strength.

Before he had fully recovered, came the news of his mother's death, which occurred at Fredericksburg on the 25th of August, at the ripe age of eighty-two. In his own weak state, he was much affected by it, and wrote to his sister as follows: "Awful and affecting as the death of a parent is, there is consolation in knowing that Heaven has spared ours to an age beyond which few attain, and favored her with the full enjoyment of her mental faculties, and as much bodily strength as usually falls to the lot of fourscore. Under these considerations, and the hope that she is translated to a happier place,

it is the duty of her relatives to yield due submission to the decrees of the Creator. When I was last at Fredericksburg I took a final leave of my mother, never expecting to see her more."

Mary, the mother of Washington, was a woman of strong mind and vigorous bodily powers, simple in her manners, upright in character, and strict in enforcing obedience from her children. She, no doubt, felt a mother's pride in the glorious career of her son, but her good sense prevented her from making any outward change in her living or deportment. During the forty-six years of her widowhood she had continued in the same home where she had trained her little orphan flock in the ways of virtue and religion ; and there, in after years, they were always welcomed with a mother's love. Of her son's perfect obedience, and regard for all her wishes, we have before spoken : in this, as in so many other ways, he has left a bright example to the boys of succeeding ages.

As is the case even at this day, the new President had a great deal of work before him in choosing and appointing suitable members of his Cabinet, and heads of departments ; but

Washington was guided in his selections by such considerations as should alone influence one in his position. He chose the men whose principles he knew to be sound, and whose abilities for the work had been well proven.

Thomas Jefferson, the writer of the Declaration of Independence, was appointed Secretary of State ; Alexander Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury ; Edmund Randolph, Attorney-General ; General Knox, Secretary of War ; and John Jay, Chief-Justice of the Supreme Court.

These were all wise appointments, and the Treasury department especially, demanded immediate attention. Of course the war had brought heavy debts, and all the States were suffering more or less from this cause : the credit of the country was very low, for as yet its resources were not developed. Its vast beds of coal and their value were then unknown ; the veins of precious metals, and of iron, lead, and copper, which in our day are so great a source of wealth, were at that time buried in the earth. Cotton was only beginning to be raised in any quantity ; manufactures of any kind were scarcely begun, and the people were few compared with the present vast population.

The debt, at the opening of the year 1790, when the Congress reassembled, amounted to the sum of fifty-four millions of dollars, of which about twelve millions were owed to parties in France, Holland, and Spain ; the balance of forty-two millions being due to those at home who had aided in the struggle for independence, either as soldiers, or by lending money and furnishing provisions for the army. Besides this general debt, each State had incurred debts of its own during the war.

Individuals who had assisted the cause, had received the pledges of the government ; but many of them being pressed for money, had parted with them at a much less price than they were really worth, so that the debt was now not all owed to the original holders of the paper ; but the debt itself remained, and some arrangement must be made for its payment.

So this was the important question which occupied the attention of Congress, and Alexander Hamilton proposed a plan for assuming the whole debt of the country, which was to be paid gradually, by a general taxation. This proposal passed finally, though not without much discussion and objection, a feeling of

jealousy between the North and the South being even then perceptible.

During this session of Congress was settled, also, the vexed question as to the location of the Capital of the United States—it being finally determined to remove the seat of government next year to Philadelphia, where it should remain during the ten years following, while suitable buildings were being erected for its permanent accommodation at some point on the Potomac, this being considered a more central, and, therefore, a better place for Congress to meet. With these two important questions settled, Washington now hoped for future harmony.

While all this was transpiring at home, the great French Revolution was progressing, with his much-loved Lafayette as its leader. Having so lately passed safely through the same perilous position himself, and well aware of the greater danger of his friend's situation, he watched each moment as anxiously as if he felt some personal interest in the affairs of France.

He wrote thus to the Marquis of Luzern
“Of one thing you may rest perfectly assured
that nobody is more anxious for the hap

issue of that business than I am, as no one can wish more sincerely for the prosperity of the French nation than I do. Nor is it without the most sensible pleasure that I learn that our friend, the Marquis de Lafayette, has, in acting the arduous part which has fallen to his share, conducted himself with so much wisdom, and, apparently, with such general satisfaction."

Two months later came a letter from Lafayette himself, full of hope for the cause of liberty in his native land, and with it a present of the key of the "Bastille," which he had demolished during the first days of the revolution. The "Bastille" was a dreadful prison in Paris, in which were confined many poor creatures, who had been cast in there secretly because they had committed some slight offences against the despotic government; and most of them had languished there for years, and now came forth into the light as living skeletons, to tell the horrors they had endured.

The messenger who brought the key, forwarded it with these words: "I feel myself happy in being the person through whom the Marquis has conveyed this early trophy of the spoils of lespotism, and the first ripe fruits of American

principles transplanted into Europe, to his great master and patron. That the principles of America opened the Bastille is not to be doubted, and, therefore, the key comes to the right place."

We need scarcely add that it was received by Washington as a precious relic, and it is still preserved at Mount Vernon.

Soon after the adjournment of Congress, Washington paid a visit to Rhode Island, which had lately been admitted into the Union; and then, having returned to New York, he once more set out for his own home at Mount Vernon, where he wished to enjoy the pleasures of solitude until the time for it to reassemble.

During the recess of Congress, Washington despatched an expedition to check the hostile Indians on the Western frontiers, in the neighborhood of the Wabash and Miami rivers, which was then a dense and howling wilderness, abounding with wild beasts and savages. These latter were constantly making attacks, and committing outrages upon the peaceable settlers in that region, and the President considered it his duty to send troops for their protection.

This little body of soldiers fought bravely with their savage enemies in several bloody battles, but came off with heavy loss: they, however, succeeded in destroying many of the Indians' villages, and inspiring them with some respect for their white neighbors.

But Washington's great desire was to civilize the Indians rather than to exterminate them. He wished to purchase their lands at a fair price, and to teach them the arts of agriculture. So, when three Seneca chiefs offered to visit the more warlike tribes, and persuade them to bury the hatchet, which was their way of proclaiming peace, the President explained to them his friendly wishes, at the same time warning them that the United States were able, and would certainly punish them for all their robberies and murders. Yet their savage tempers were not to be controlled by these persuasions or warnings, and their ravages at length grew so intolerable, that war was the only thing to be thought of. These wars continued during several years, until, after many disasters to our army, General Wayne gained a decisive victory, and the troubles were finally ended by a treaty of peace.

In December, 1790, the seat of government was changed to Philadelphia, and Congress met there in the old State House, now known as "Independence Hall," the President of course removing his household to the same city. Some pleasant recollections of his residence there, are given in the Life of Bishop White, who was at that time the Bishop of Pennsylvania, and Rector of Christ Church, to which congregation Washington belonged. A part of the old pew which he used to occupy there is preserved in the east room of Independence Hall, together with other interesting relics, and many valuable portraits of the great men of those days. In the Church, Bishop White held somewhat the same position as that which Washington held in the State—a loyal leader, and supporter of American views and American interests.

This year, the United States Bank was chartered, and went into operation with a capital of ten millions of dollars, after much discussion in Congress, some being warmly in favor of the measure, and others fearful of bad consequences from the issue of a paper currency. There were also other topics of warm discussion, such as taxes and the rules of trade, and parties be-

gan to be formed which took decided stands, and were represented by leading men.

In the Cabinet, Jefferson and Randolph were opposed to the bank question, and other proposed plans for paying off the debt of the country by taxation ; while Hamilton and Knox took the other side, and believed that such measures were necessary to strengthen the General Government. Those who held the former views were known as Republicans, or Democrats, and the others as Federalists ; they soon became powerful parties, extending throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Washington belonged to neither party ; but weighing these important matters impartially, and with an unprejudiced mind, he cast his vote in favor of the bank. High rose the commotions and disputes between the opposite parties ; yet there was one subject on which all were thus far agreed and united—their love and reverence for Washington.

CHAPTER XXI.

Tour through the Southern States—Brief stay at Mount Vernon—Re-election—French Revolution—Death of Louis XVI.—Washington's anxiety for Lafayette—War between France and England—Course of the United States—Dissatisfaction of some of the people—Improper conduct of England—Washington's desire to settle the difficulties without war—Mr. Jay sent out—A treaty of commerce and peace—Insolent behavior of the French Minister—His recall demanded by Washington—James Monroe sent over to France—His cordial reception—The whiskey insurrection—Signing of Jay's treaty—Arrival of George Washington Lafayette—Washington's efforts for his father's release—Reunion of the family.

IN the month of March, 1791, Washington started on a tour through the Southern States, and travelled nearly nineteen hundred miles with the same horses, stopping at some of the principal places in Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia, and being absent about twelve weeks. The object of this tour was that he might see the state of the country and learn the views of the people ; and the favorable opinion he re-

ceived in this personal inspection is recorded in his written account of the journey.

In the Autumn, he once more came to pass a few weeks in his home at Mount Vernon, and only with regret did he again leave it to return to the busy cares of the government. No wonder that he now began to count the months that must intervene before his term of office would expire, for he was weary with the political strifes and discussions that were to be heard on every hand. At that time he was firm in his resolve to retire into private life at the end of the four years for which he had been elected.

But in 1792 came the next election, and the leaders of the two political parties, as well as his personal friends everywhere, having urged him, for the good of the country at that critical period, to remain at the head of its government, he reluctantly yielded to their wishes, and consented, for his country's sake, to give up for four years longer those sweet rural enjoyments which were his highest dream of happiness. Again he was chosen by a unanimous election, and on the fourth of March, 1793, took the oath of office for the second time.

The bloody revolution in France was still

going on, and Louis XVI., the king who had remembered us in our time of trouble, fell a victim to the mob. When the news came that the king was beheaded, some who remembered his generous assistance to this country, were filled with grief, while others hailed the event as the signal of triumph for the republican party.

But in France a dreadful scene was being enacted, and "the reign of terror" had indeed commenced. People were thrown into prison upon mere suspicion, and in a few days were dragged forth to the guillotine. Washington was shocked at such atrocities, committed in the name of liberty, and full of grief at the intelligence that Lafayette was in prison. In all the fidelity of his nature, he at once thought of the destitution and loneliness of his friend's wife and family, and despatched a letter of sympathy to the Marchioness, accompanied with a sum of money for her use.

In the Spring came also the news of war between France and England, and something was to be at once decided on, as regarded the course that the United States should take, whether of alliance with France, or entire neutrality. Washington hastened to Philadelphia to consult his

Cabinet on the subject, for already parties were forming, and privateers were being fitted out. These last were ships that were to sail out and plunder or capture vessels belonging to the nations which were at war.

Washington decided in favor of neutrality on the part of the United States, not from any preference for England, but from motives of prudence, for he knew well that we were as yet in no condition to plunge again into a war in which we had nothing to gain, yet might lose so much. But then there were many who blamed him for this decision, and spoke evil of his pure name, declaring that this was a plain proof of his partiality for England. For the first time whispers were heard against him in certain quarters—so soon were his former services and sacrifices likely to be forgotten.

The republican, or democratic party, as it was called, were so desirous of aiding France, that the President's wish to stand aloof from the contest was called a mark of ingratitude to that country, and by that party his proclamation, forbidding all persons to take part in the war, was treated with scorn and indignation. But nothing could make him change his decree

when duty was so plainly before him. "I have a consolation within," he writes to Governor Lee, of Virginia, "that no earthly effort can deprive me of, and that is, that neither ambitious nor interested motives have influenced my conduct. The arrows of malevolence, therefore, however barbed and well-pointed, can never reach the most vulnerable part of me; though, whilst I am set up as a mark, they will be continually aimed."

No wonder that, with all these irritating circumstances surrounding him, he repented of having accepted a second term of office, and, sick of public life, longed for the seclusion of his lovely home. But, while the war in Europe continued, there was little hope of quietness in America, so decided and outspoken were the opinions of the people.

On the first of January, 1794, Thomas Jefferson, the able Secretary of State, retired from the Cabinet, much against the wishes of the President, who held the highest opinion of his services and talents. He was succeeded by Edmund Randolph—William Bradford taking his place as Attorney-General.

From the close of the Revolution up to this

time the behavior of England towards the United States had been very unsatisfactory, and there was a long list of grievances which that nation persisted in keeping up. There was a continued evidence of hostile feeling, which was shown in various acts of injustice and disregard of treaties. They still held the military posts on the frontiers, though they had promised to leave them; they tampered constantly with the Indians, and encouraged them to commit outrages on our people; they searched our vessels on the high seas, and forced our seamen into their service, while their privateers seized and robbed our ships. Last of all, they interfered with our commerce, by stopping all ships going from our ports with cargoes of corn or flour to France, and also all ships bringing French goods to us. Thus things were growing worse and worse, and the encroachments and insolence of Great Britain would well have warranted the United States in once more proclaiming war.

But Washington wished to avert such a calamity, preferring to settle the questions peaceably, if possible, though, in the mean time, he recommended Congress to put the country in

a state of defence, in case all other means of adjusting the difficulty should fail. With the good of his country at heart before all other questions, he proposed to the Senate that John Jay should be sent as an envoy to England, with instructions to settle the grievances. "My objects are," he wrote to Mr. Randolph, "to prevent a war, if justice can be obtained by fair and strong representations of the injuries which this country has sustained from Great Britain in various ways, to put it into a complete state of military defence, and to provide eventually for the execution of such measures as seem to be now pending in Congress, if negotiation in a reasonable time proves unsuccessful."

Mr. Jay was accordingly sent, and a treaty of commerce and friendship was the result; not quite as full and complete as Washington could have wished, but one that it was honorable for us to accept, and far better than a war, which at that time might have brought ruin on the new Republic. In all this, we who live at this day, can see and appreciate the wisdom of Washington; but bitter indeed was the discord that was heard among the people, both in Congress and out of it.

Mr. Genet, the French minister at this time, had made himself very offensive and troublesome to the government, seeming determined, if possible, to draw us into a war with England, by forcing us to take sides with France. That part of the people which sympathized so warmly with the latter nation, acted very imprudently by treating him with marked admiration, and wherever he went, they cheered him as if he were some noted character. His own actions, from his first landing in Charleston, were strange, and he mistakenly thought that this wild excitement of the mob showed the true feelings and intentions of the government. He himself represented the bloody revolutionists of France, and seemed to think that as we had just passed through a revolution ourselves, we ought to approve of the lawless and violent acts that had stained their own course.

But however they may have both grown out of a desire for liberty, the American Revolution had been disgraced by no such dreadful scenes as had taken place in France ; and Genet's disorderly conduct showed too plainly that he still held the same extreme views as had led his unhappy countrymen into such fatal mistakes. When

informed of the intention of this government to remain neutral, he made improper reflections upon its decision, reproached it with ingratitude to France, and scorned and defied its authority, until, when his conduct had become intolerable, Washington demanded of the French government that he should be recalled, and another sent in his place. This was at once done, our own minister to France being likewise changed.

James Monroe, the new American Minister, who succeeded Gouverneur Morris, arrived at a time of great commotion, when a better spirit was beginning to prevail in that distracted country. Robespierre, the tyrant whose very name is handed down by history as that of a most wicked and bloodthirsty man, had ended his days on the scaffold, where so many others had perished by his orders, and thus the "reign of terror" was over. Mr. Monroe was just the man to enter into the spirit of the hour, and he was welcomed by the French Convention then sitting, with the most cordial feelings, while the American and French flags were hung together in the hall where they were assembled, as a token of friendship between the two republics.

In the summer of 1794, another trouble arose.

The new excise law, laying a tax on whiskey, and other spirituous liquors, with the intention of increasing the revenue of the country, had been very unpopular with many of those who were engaged in the business of distilling them, and in many places it was known that the law was evaded, and the taxes unpaid. With a view to correct this evil, marshals were appointed who were to exercise the strictest vigilance and arrest all persons engaged in this secret traffic. These orders led to an insurrection in the western part of Pennsylvania, of such a serious character, that the military were called out to suppress it, and Washington himself left Philadelphia to lead the army.

When the armed insurgents, who had gathered in large numbers to oppose the laws, saw the alarming measures that were to be adopted, they discreetly concluded to give up their riotous intentions, and return to their homes; thus the difficulty was ended without bloodshed, and they were shown the authority of the law, and the ability of the government to enforce it. A regiment of soldiers under General Morgan were left to guard the neighborhood during the winter, but there was no further outbreak.

The first seeds from whence these lawless proceedings had grown, were sown by the troublesome Genet, who, during his stay, did all he could to start secret societies, whose chief tendencies were to oppose this good government, and encourage discord among the people. But fortunately these things wore themselves out in time, and as the public confidence increased, these murmurings subsided.

On the 18th of August, 1795, Washington signed Mr. Jay's treaty with England, to which we have before alluded, and thus for the present all fears of war with that nation were at rest. This year also, George Washington Lafayette, son of the Marquis, arrived in this country, with his tutor, and Washington received him cordially, and took him at once under his protection. Among the many occurrences which annoyed and distressed the mind of the President, was the continued captivity of his friend, who had now been in prison for many months, first in Prussia, and then in Austria.

Washington had used all the means in his power to obtain his release, and at last wrote himself to the Emperor, begging for his pardon. "What influence this letter may have had on

the mind of the Emperor," says Sparks, "or on the fate of Lafayette, is not known. When restored to liberty, he was delivered over, by order of the Austrian government, to the American consul at Hamburg."

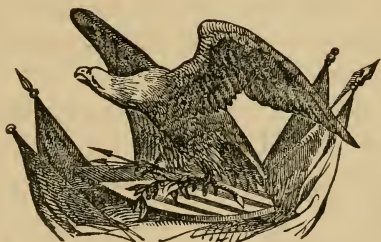
On the 19th of September, 1797, Lafayette was released, and his son, having sailed for France on the first rumor of such good news, rejoined his family in Germany.

Washington, who lost no opportunity of expressing his love and friendship, wrote thus, by the hands of his namesake:

"This letter, I hope and expect, will be presented to you by your son, who is highly deserving of such parents as you and your amiable lady.

"He can relate, much better than I can describe, my participation in your sufferings, my solicitude for your relief, the measures I adopted, though ineffectual, to facilitate your liberation from an unjust and cruel imprisonment, and the joy I experienced at the news of its accomplishment. I shall hasten, therefore, to congratulate you, and be assured that no one can do it with more cordiality, with more sincerity, or with greater affection, on the restora-

tion of that liberty which every act of your life entitles you to the enjoyment of ; and I hope I may add, to the uninterrupted possession of your estates, and the confidence of your country."



CHAPTER XXII.

Washington's Farewell Address—John Adams and Thomas Jefferson elected President and Vice-President—Washington's last meeting with Congress—Farewell dinner—Inauguration of the new President—Return to Mount Vernon—Washington once more hears his country call—Prospect of war with France—Matters peacefully arranged—Winter at Mount Vernon—Alarming illness—Preparations for death—Closing scenes—Funeral—Action of Congress—Sorrow of the people—His will—Provision for his slaves—His views of slavery.

It was on the 15th of September, 1796, that Washington published his celebrated "Farewell Address" to the people of the United States; so that long before the election it was known that he was resolved to retire from office, and, indeed, no inducements could now have persuaded him to continue in his arduous position. This Address is a master-piece of composition, and contains the same wise counsels and rare insight into the wants of the country which had always marked his public speeches. We will but quote the concluding paragraphs,

for the whole should be studied by every American boy who is old enough to read these pages:

“ Though, in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence ; and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

“ Relying on its kindness in this, as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love toward it, which is so natural to a man who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations, I anticipate with pleasing expectation that retreat in which I promise myself to realize without alloy the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow-citizens, the benign influence of good laws, under a free government, the ever favorite

object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labors, and dangers."

The election resulted in the choice of John Adams, the former Vice-President, as President, and Thomas Jefferson for Vice-President. On the 7th of December Washington met Congress for the last time, and in his parting speech took a comprehensive view of the wants of the country, and explained the state of its foreign relations—recommending, also, the establishment of several national schools and a gradual increase of the navy.

Several of his letters, written about this time, show how anxiously he was looking forward to the pleasures of retirement. To General Knox he writes: "The remainder of my life, which, in the course of nature, cannot be long, will be occupied in rural amusements; and though I shall seclude myself as much as possible from the noisy and bustling world, none would, more than myself, be regaled by the company of those I esteem, at Mount Vernon—more than twenty miles from which, after I arrive there, it is not likely that I shall ever be."

"On the day before President Washington retired from office," says Bishop White, "a

large company dined with him. Among them were the foreign ministers and their ladies, Mr. and Mrs. Adams, Mr. Jefferson, and other conspicuous persons of both sexes. During the dinner much hilarity prevailed; but on the removal of the cloth it was put an end to by the President, certainly without design. Having filled his glass, he addressed the company with a smile, as nearly as can be recollected, in the following words: 'Ladies and gentlemen, this is the last time I shall drink your health as a public man: I do it with sincerity—wishing you all possible happiness!' There was an end of all pleasantries. He who gives this relation accidentally directed his eye to the lady of the British minister, Mrs. Liston, and tears were running down her cheeks."

On the fourth of March, 1797, Washington was present as a spectator at the inauguration of his successor—happy to be relieved from the weight of his weary burdens, and well contented to resign his duties to one whose principles he so heartily approved. The same evening a grand entertainment was given to him by the people of Philadelphia, in token of their respect and veneration, and on the following

day he set about his preparations for the journey to Mount Vernon, where, in company with his family, he arrived safely, having been escorted thither by many evidences of the people's love.

And there he once more plunged into the pursuits of farming and gardening, though with somewhat less energy than formerly ; for he admitted that he was beginning to feel himself growing old. Even the duties of hospitality were more arduous to him, when the crowds of visitors came thronging in upon him, leaving no time for quietness and rest.

But once more, before one year at Mount Vernon had passed away, symptoms of a war with France arose, and it became necessary to make immediate preparations in case of extremity. In this sudden emergency they appealed to Washington again to take the head of the whole army, and, with the same undying love for his country, he consented to act as their commander whenever the needful time should come ; and as it had been his advice before, so he now approved of speedy preparations for war, even in time of peace, that they might be ready for any emergency.

These arrangements were immediately begun ; generals were appointed, and an army organized, when the French, finding how matters stood, and being, perhaps, somewhat afraid to contend with Washington's army, suddenly changed their tone, and expressed their willingness to settle the differences in a friendly way.

Of course, these terms were gladly accepted by the President, who at once sent three ministers to Paris, with full power to negotiate the matter.

When they reached France, Napoleon Bonaparte was President of the Republic, and he received them so favorably, that all things were finally arranged, and war once more avoided.

But, of course, it required several months to complete the treaty, and for the good news to be received at home, and in the mean time winter had come, with its cold storms and bleak winds. Washington, as usual, rode out every day to look after his "outposts," as he called the distant portions of the estate, and on the 12th of December, although the day was stormy, and the wind cold, he took his accustomed ride, coming in after three o'clock,

with his overcoat wet and the snow-flakes resting in his hair.

Those five hours' exposure resulted in a serious cold, sore throat, and hoarseness, which lingered for a day or two before it settled into alarming illness. It was about three o'clock on the morning of the 14th that he awakened his wife, saying that he had a chill, and felt very badly; but he was so fearful of her taking cold herself, that he would not permit her to rise and call help. By daylight the difficulty of breathing had increased so much that he was scarcely able to utter a word. A doctor was immediately sent for, and in the mean time, at his own request, he was bled by one of his overseers—that being the customary way of treating most diseases at that time, but in his case without any relief of the suffering.

Before nine o'clock, Dr. Craik, an old friend, arrived, and two other physicians were also called. All the remedies that their united skill could suggest were applied, but without effect.

"About half-past four," writes Mr. Lear, his secretary, "he desired me to call Mrs. Washington to his bedside, when he requested her to go down into his room and take from his

desk two wills, which she would find there, and bring them to him, which she did. Upon looking at them, he gave her one, which he observed was useless, as being superseded by the other, and desired her to burn it, which she did, and took the other and put it into her closet.

“After this was done, I returned to his bedside, and took his hand. He said to me: ‘I find I am going; my breath cannot last long. I believed from the first that the disorder would prove fatal. Do you arrange all my late military letters and papers. Arrange my accounts and settle my books, as you know more about them than any one else; and let Mr. Rawlins finish recording my other letters which he has begun.’ I told him this should be done. He then asked if I recollected anything which it was essential for him to do, as he had but a very short time to continue with us. I told him that I could recollect nothing, but that I hoped he was not so near his end. He observed, smiling, that he certainly was, and that, as it was the debt which we must all pay, he looked to the event with perfect resignation.”

In the afternoon he was in great pain, and was so restless that the w^r was obliged often to

change his position in bed. He seemed constantly to feel annoyed lest he should fatigue them, and remarked to Mr. Lear, who was always there : "It is a debt we must pay to each other, and I hope when you want aid of this kind you will find it."

Having noticed that his old servant, Christopher, had been standing for a long time, he told him to sit down,—showing that he did not, even then, forget the wants of those around him.

About five o'clock he said to Dr. Craik : "I die hard, but I am not afraid to go. I believed from my first attack, that I should not survive it. My breath cannot last long."

Other remedies were administered during the evening, but without effect. "About ten o'clock," writes Mr. Lear, "he made several attempts to speak to me, before he could effect it. At length he said, 'I am just going. Have me decently buried, and do not let my body be put into the vault in less than three days after I am dead!' I bowed assent, for I could not speak. He then looked at me again, and said, 'Do you understand me?' I replied, 'Yes!' 'Tis well!' said he.

"About ten minutes before he expired (which

was between ten and eleven o'clock), his breathing became easier. He lay quietly: he withdrew his hand from mine, and felt his own pulse. I saw his countenance change. I spoke to Dr. Craik, who sat by the fire. He came to the bedside. The General's hand fell from his wrist: I took it in mine and pressed it to my bosom. Dr. Craik put his hands over his eyes, and he expired without a struggle or a sigh.

"While we were fixed in silent grief, Mrs. Washington, who was seated at the foot of the bed, asked with a firm and collected voice, 'Is he gone?' I could not speak, but held up my hand as a signal that he was no more. 'Tis well,' said she, in the same voice. 'All is now over. I shall soon follow him. I have no more trials to pass through.'"

Thus, on the 14th of December, 1799, the great Washington closed his eyes forever in this world, and the nation lost its father and counsellor.

The funeral took place on the 18th of December, when his body was laid in the old family vault on the Mount Vernon estate, where his forefathers for generations had been entombed. The hour fixed on was three in the afternoon,

but by eleven o'clock the neighboring population, with the town authorities of Alexandria, the militia, and Freemasons, began to collect.

The procession left the house at the appointed time, and passed out at the left wing, proceeding around in front of the lawn, and down to the vault, which was on the right of the house, minute-guns being fired from a schooner in the river. First came the troops, then four clergymen; then the General's horse, led by two grooms in mourning; next, the body, carried by the Freemasons and officers; after which followed the members of his family and numerous friends. The sublime service of the Episcopal Church was read by the Rev. Mr. Davis; the Freemasons also performed their ceremonies, and then the body was laid in the vault. There was no gorgeous display, but all was simple and solemn, just as Washington himself would have wished it to be.*

When the sad news reached Congress, which was then in session in Philadelphia, it immediately adjourned for the day, and the next day resolutions were passed, expressing the deep

* See note at the end.

sorrow of the people. The speaker's chair was shrouded in black, and the members of Congress assumed a mourning garb during the remainder of the session. On the 26th of January, 1800, the day was specially set apart for religious services, and a solemn commemoration of the virtues of the man who was "first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen."

In every town and village where the news had come, there were lamentations and mourning ; for the whole nation wept over his grave. Nor was this sentiment of grief confined to our own country alone ; in France, and England also, there were marked tokens of respect for his memory, and the flags were craped and placed at half-mast.

The will of General Washington had been carefully made, and given into his wife's hands, as has been stated, a short time before he died. Upon opening it, it was discovered that one of the first provisions contained in it, ordered the emancipation of all his slaves on the death of his wife : the only reason why he delayed doing this during their own lives was, that many of them had married among the negroes belong-

ing to Mrs. Washington in her own right, and it therefore seemed impossible to set them free so long as she lived. But he expressly forbade the sale of any of his negroes, or their removal from Virginia. Besides this, he made provision for the support of such as were too old or infirm to maintain themselves.

At the present writing, when slavery is abolished by law in these free United States, it is pleasant to reflect that Washington, although born and brought up a slaveholder, yet deplored the system, and longed for some plan by which it could be done away with. In a letter to Mr. John F. Mercer, in 1786, he says: "I never mean, unless some particular circumstances should compel me to it, to possess another slave by purchase, it being among my first wishes to see some plan adopted by which slavery in this country may be abolished by law."

And again, to his nephew Lawrence Lewis, he writes: "I wish from my soul that the Legislature of this State (Virginia) could see the policy of a gradual abolition of slavery. It might prevent much future mischief."

CHAPTER XXIII.

Character of Washington—His bright example—Traits of his childhood and youth—His manhood—His religion and patriotism—Self-control—Dislike of profanity—His personal appearance—Conclusion.

AND now, having given a brief glance at the life of this great and good man, interwoven as it is with the history of our country, it only remains for us to sum up his character, and draw attention once more to the shining points which mark his career from early childhood to the last hours of his life ;—his unwavering love of truth ; his reverence and obedience toward his parents, especially to that widowed mother upon whom had fallen the duty of training him ; his trust in God, and desire to be led by the Divine hand in all his difficulties. What a bright example he has given to the boys of America ! And not to them only, for his name is treasured in many other lands as a model of wisdom and virtue.

Then as he grew to man's estate, we have shown how industriously he labored to make himself proficient in his profession, and how that proficiency led the way to success in more arduous and responsible positions. Then, when his country called him to lead her armies, the benefit of such habits became apparent, and with a mind accustomed to reflect, and a wise judgment to decide, he entered on the great work before him, and, by the blessing of Almighty God, achieved the independence of his country.

In the foregoing pages, we have described some of the trying scenes and discouragements of those weary years ; but no words of ours can tell what a weight of responsibility rested on that one man, to whom God had given the great work of setting his country free. And then, when the delights of home were before him, and just within his reach, he resigned them once more at the call of duty, his patriotism being a part of his religion. "His most sacred duty to himself," says Irving, "was his highest duty to his country and his God."

The character of Washington is one of the

brightest in history, and while the world shall last, his name will be handed down from generation to generation as an example of pure virtue, noble ambition, and wise judgment. His passions were strong, and sometimes, when tried beyond his power to control them, they found vent in excited words; but they were almost instantly checked, so great was his habit of self-control.

Profanity was a thing he would never permit, and during the campaigns of the Revolution, he repeatedly issued orders to prevent profane swearing among the soldiers. Once, when a number of officers were dining with him, one of them uttered an oath. Washington immediately laid down his knife and fork, saying with solemn dignity: "I thought we all supposed ourselves to be gentlemen." Of course the rebuke was felt, and no more swearing was heard in his presence.

Of his personal appearance we can form a tolerably good opinion from the many likenesses around us. He was six feet in height, with a broad chest, regular features, and blue eyes; a grave expression of countenance, yet placid and kind. An eye-witness who saw him in New

York during the first year of his first presidential term, thus describes him :

“In the year of our Lord 1790, I stood upon the door-step of the counting-house of which I was then but the youngest clerk, when the companion beside me hurriedly said, ‘There he comes! There comes Washington!’ I looked up Pearl-street, and saw approaching with stately tread and open brow, the Father of my country. His hat was off, for the day was sultry, and he was accompanied by Colonel Page and James Madison. Never have I forgotten, nor shall I to my dying day forget, the serene, the benign, the godlike expression of that man of men. His lofty mien, and commanding figure, set off to advantage by an elegant dress, consisting of a blue coat, buff small-clothes, silver knee and shoe buckles, and white vest; his powdered locks, and powerful vigorous look (for he was then in the prime and strength of his manhood), have never faded from my mind during the many years which, with all their chances and changes, have rolled between.”*

Well may we hold up to the admiration of the

* Personal Recollections of the American Revolution, edited by Sidney Barclay.

rising generation, such a character as this,—one that has never been charged with a single vice, a devout and sincere Christian, who spent his life in the service of his country, and whose lasting monument is in every heart.



N O T E.

The following description of the tomb of Washington is taken from Harper's Monthly, March, 1859 :

“Over the door of the tomb, upon a stone panel, are cut these words: ‘I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live!’ The old vault referred to was upon the brow of a declivity, in full view of the river, about three hundred yards south of the mansion, on the left of the present pathway from the tomb to the summer-house on the edge of the lawn. It is now in utter ruin. The doorway is gone, and the cavity is partly filled with rubbish. Therein the remains of Washington lay undisturbed for thirty years, when an attempt was made by some Vandal to carry them away. The insecure old vault was entered, and a skull and some bones were taken; but these composed no part of the remains of the illustrious dead. The robber was detected, and the bones were recovered. The new vault was then immediately built, and all the family re-

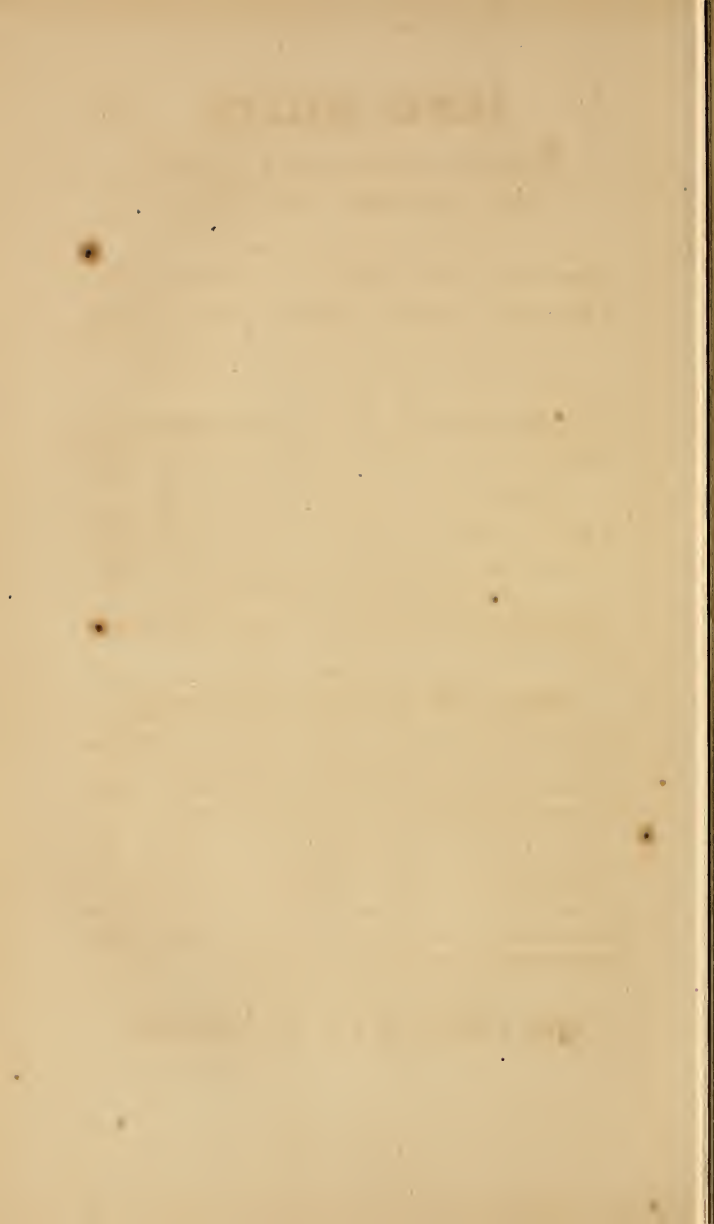
mains were placed in it. Mr. William Strickland, of Philadelphia, who designed the composition on the lid of Washington's coffin, and accompanied Mr. Struthers when the remains of the patriot were placed in it in 1837, has left a most interesting account of that event. On entering the vault, they found everything in confusion. Decayed fragments of coffins were scattered about, and bones of various parts of the human body were seen promiscuously thrown together. The decayed wood was dripping with moisture. 'The slimy snail glistened in the light of the door-opening. The brown centipede was disturbed by the admission of fresh air, and the mouldy cases of the dead gave a pungent and unwholesome odor.' The coffins of Washington and his lady were in the deepest recess of the vault. They were of lead, enclosed in wooden cases. When the sarcophagus arrived, the coffin of the Chief was brought forth. The vault was first entered by Mr. Strickland, accompanied by Major Lewis (the last survivor of the first executors of the will of Washington) and his son. When the decayed wooden case was removed, the leaden lid was perceived to be sunken and fractured. In the bottom of the wooden case was found the silver coffin-plate, in the form of a shield, which was placed upon the

leadern coffin when Washington was first entombed. 'At the request of Major Lewis,' says Mr. Strickland, 'the fractured part of the lid was turned over on the lower part, exposing to view a head and breast of large dimensions, which appeared, by the dim light of the candles, to have suffered but little from the effects of time. The eye-sockets were large and deep, and the breadth across the temples, together with the forehead, appeared of unusual size. There was no appearance of grave-clothes; the chest was broad,*the color was dark, and had the appearance of dried flesh and skin adhering closely to the bones. We saw no hair, nor was there any offensive odor from the body; but we observed, when the coffin had been removed to the outside of the vault, the dripping down of a yellow liquid, which stained the marble of the sarcophagus. A hand was laid upon the head, and instantly removed; the leaden lid was restored to its place, the body, raised by six men, was carried and laid in the marble coffin, and the ponderous cover being put on and set in cement, it was sealed from our sight on Saturday, the 7th day of October, 1837. * * * The relatives who were present, consisting of Major Lewis, Lorenzo Lewis, John Augustine Washington, George Washington, the Rev. Mr. Johnson and lady, and

Mrs. Jane Washington, then retired to the mansion. On the east side of the tomb, beneath neat marble monuments, lie the remains of Mrs. Eleanor Parke Lewis, and her daughter, Mrs. M. E. Conrad. The former was the grand-daughter of Mrs. Washington, and adopted daughter of the General. In front of the tomb are two stately obelisks of marble; the one on the right commemorates the eminent Judge Bushrod Washington, nephew of the General, who inherited Mount Vernon; the one on the left, John Augustine Washington, a nephew of the Judge, and father of the present proprietor of the estate. These are all the family monuments that stand by the tomb of the patriot."

Since the above was written the estate of Mount Vernon, with the sacred tomb of Washington, has become the property of the nation, having been purchased by the "Ladies' Mount Vernon Association," the money having been raised by voluntary contributions from all parts of the Union.

THE END.



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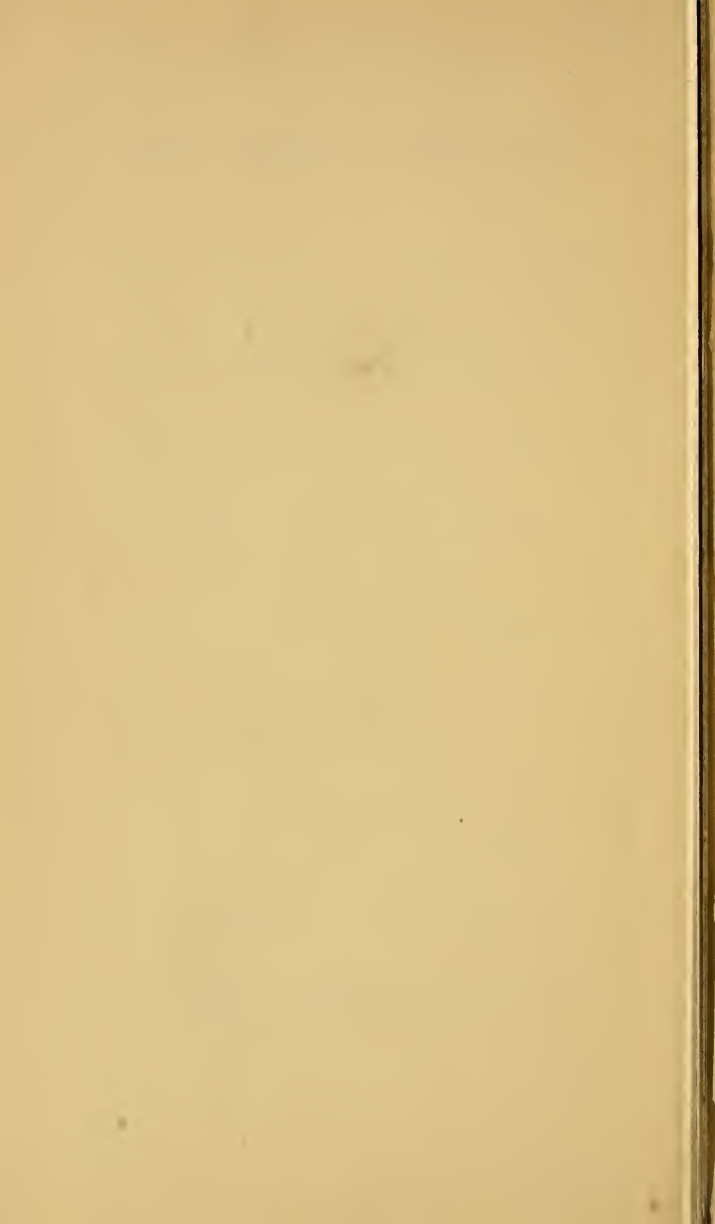
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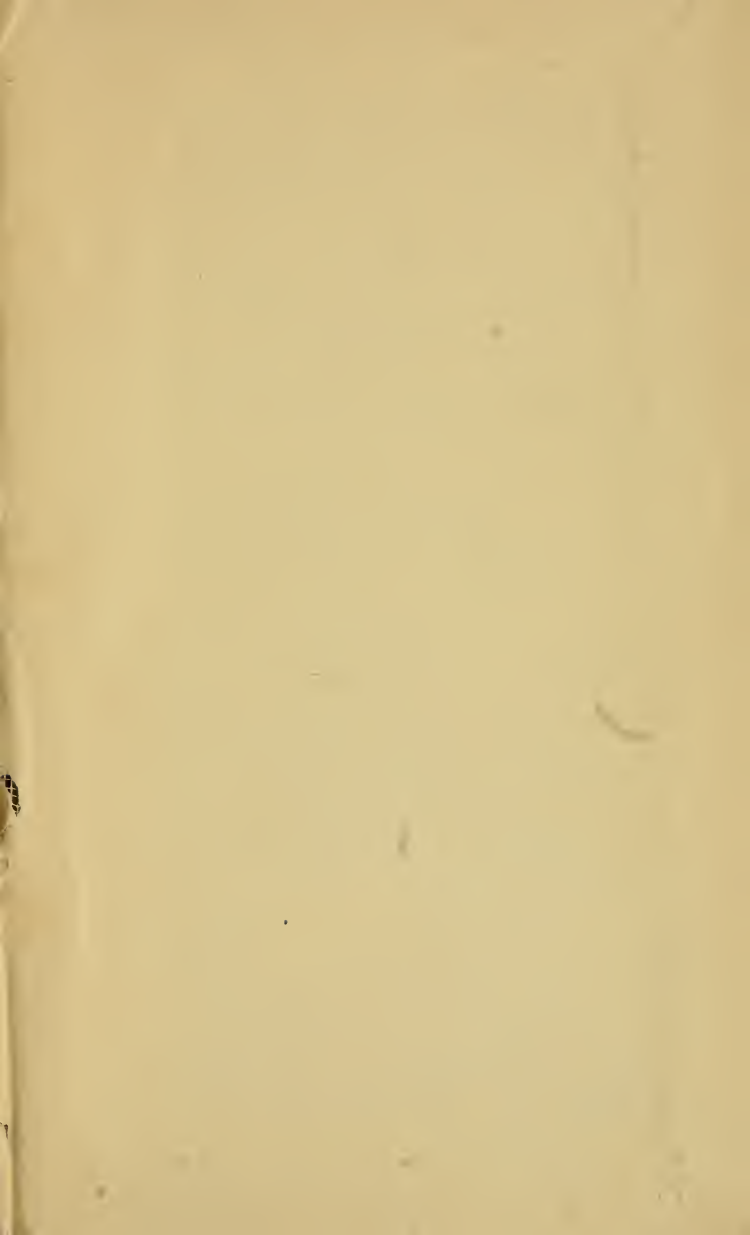
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